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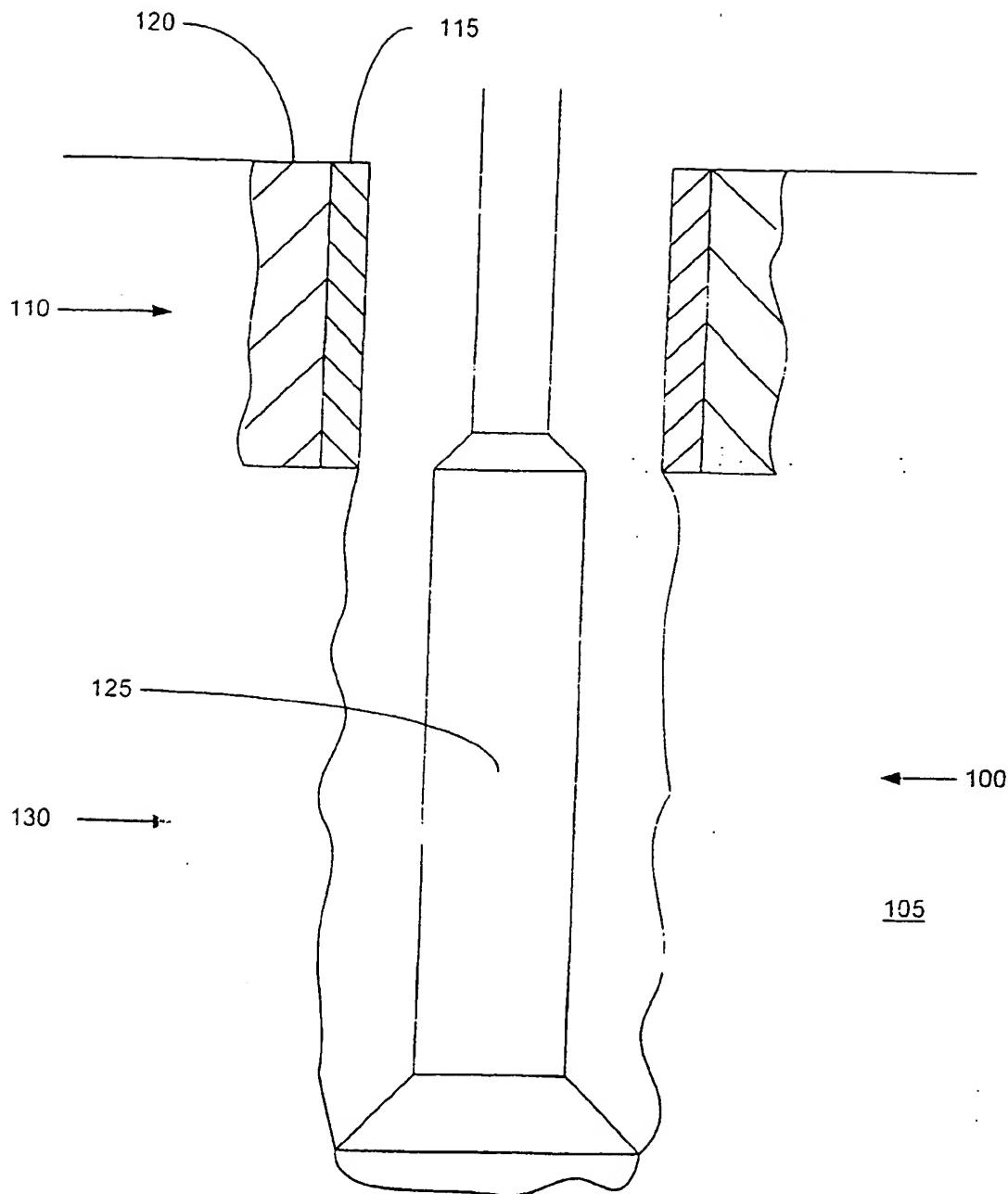


FIGURE 1

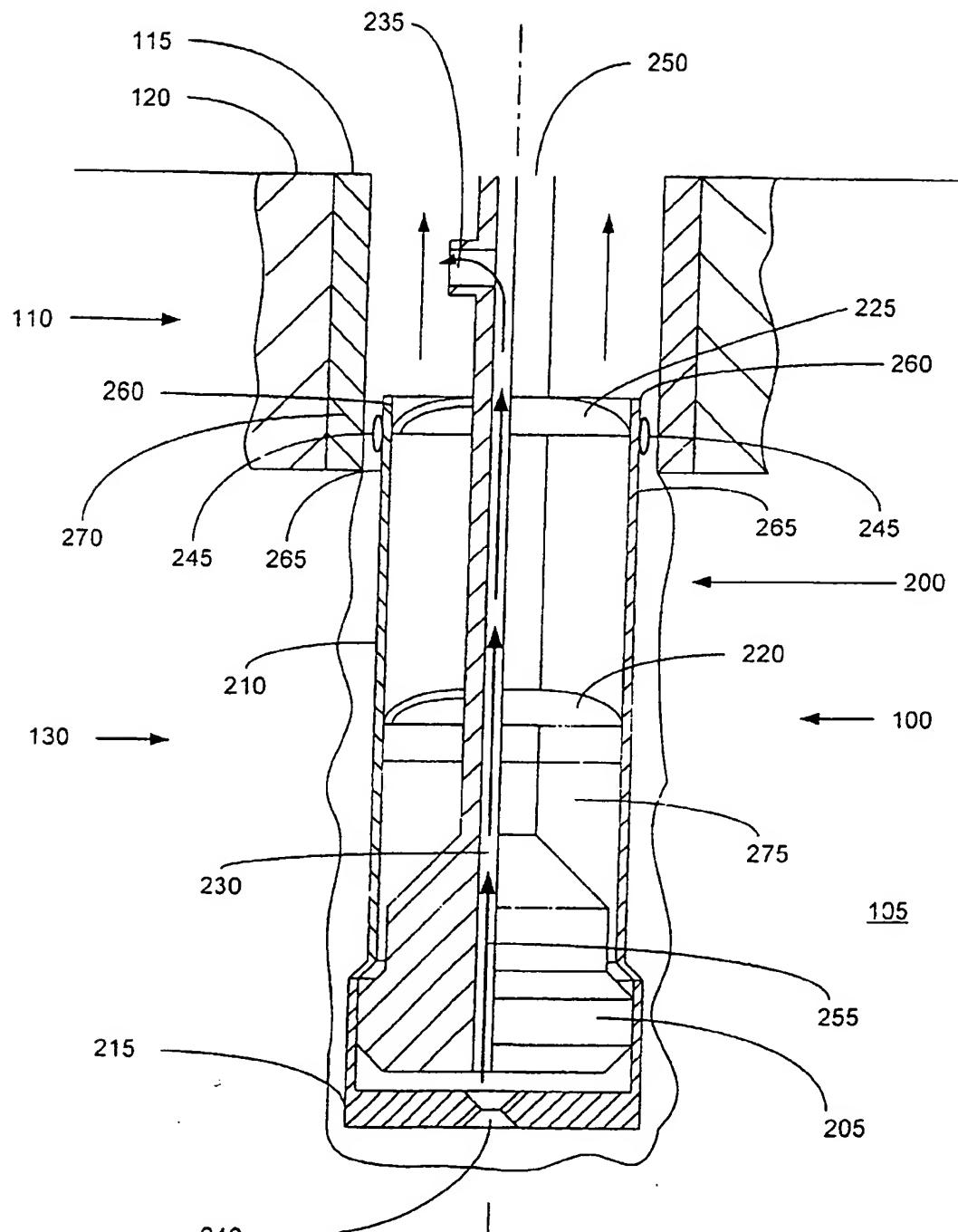


FIGURE 2

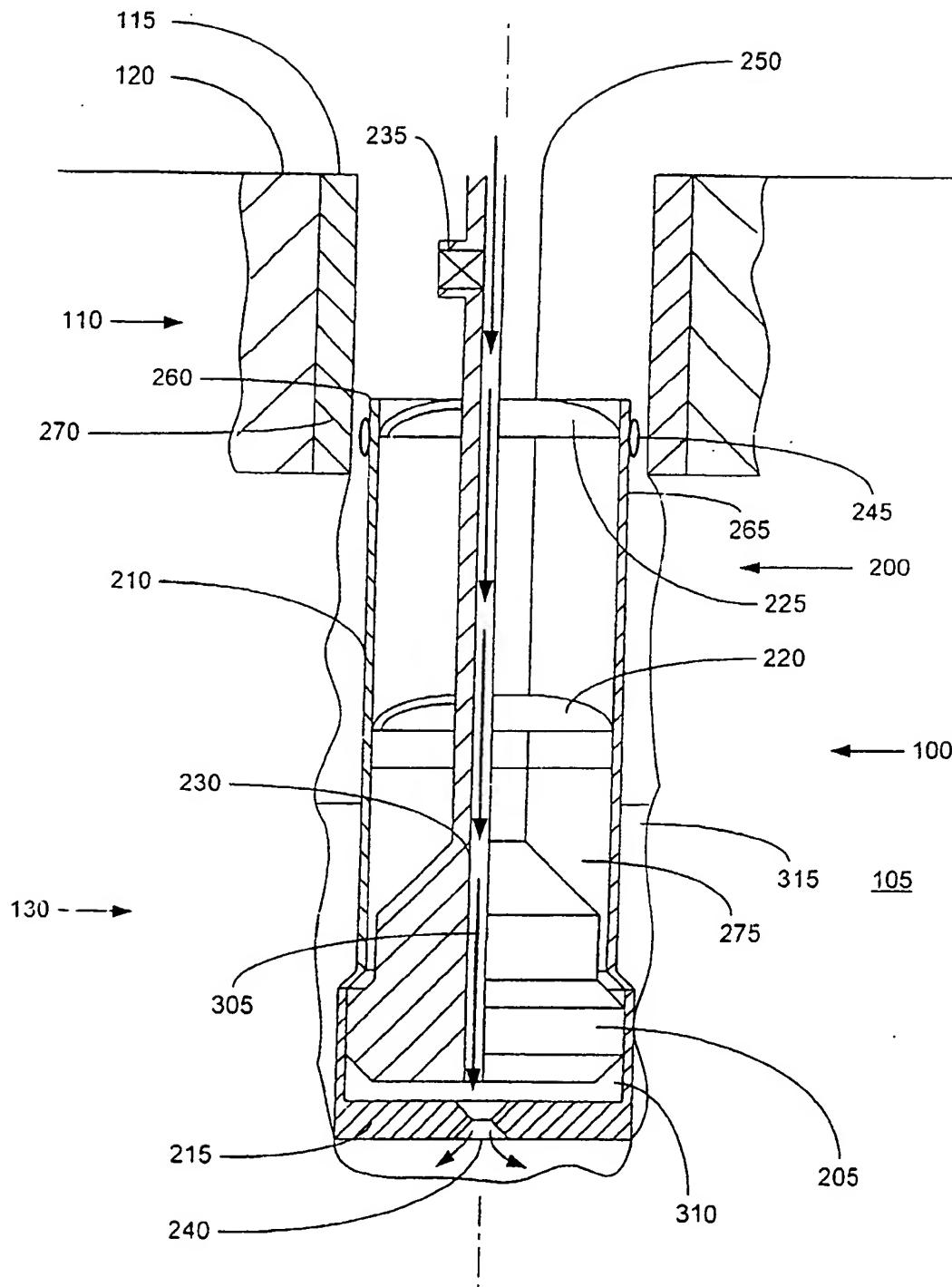


FIGURE 3

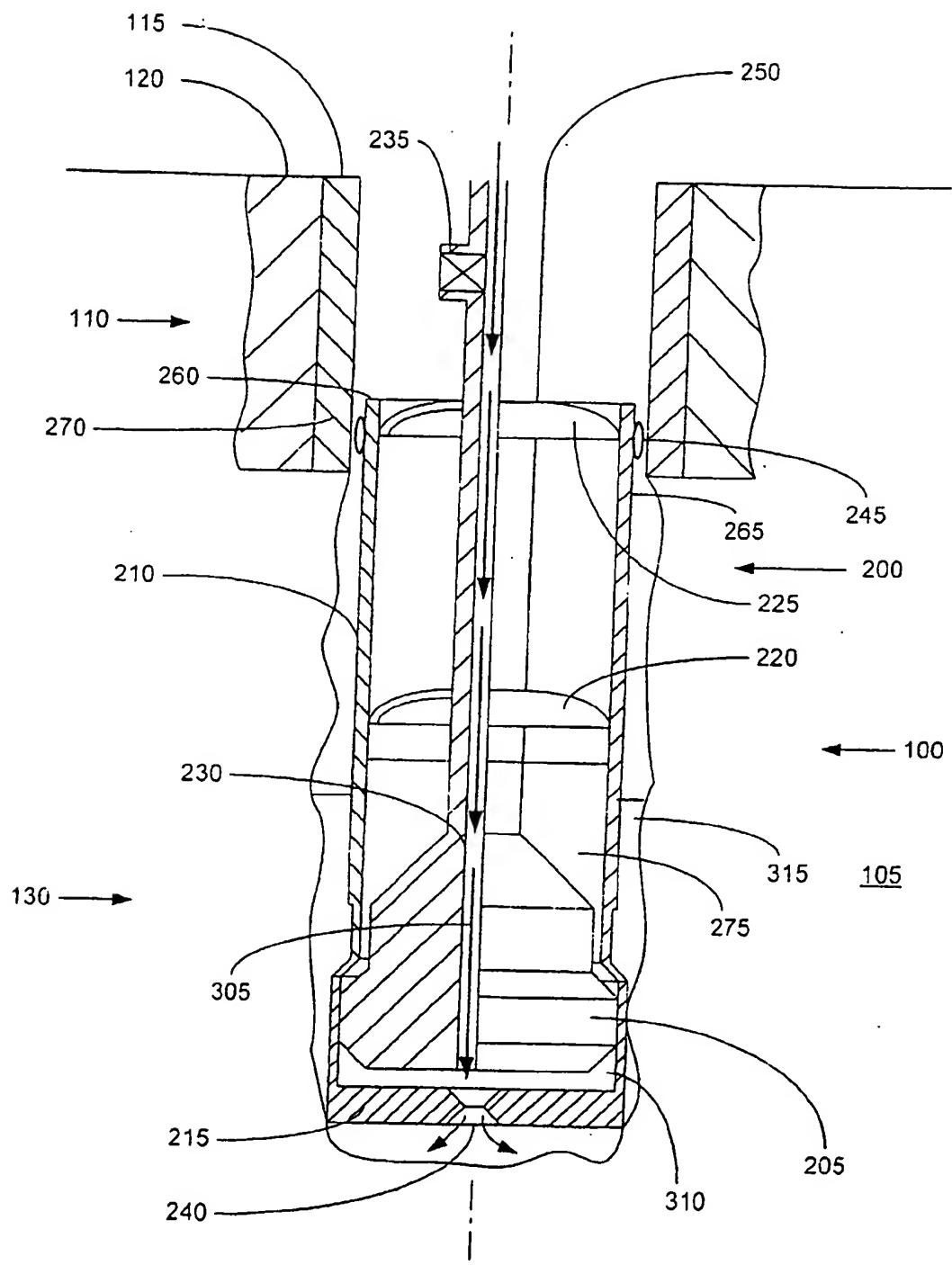
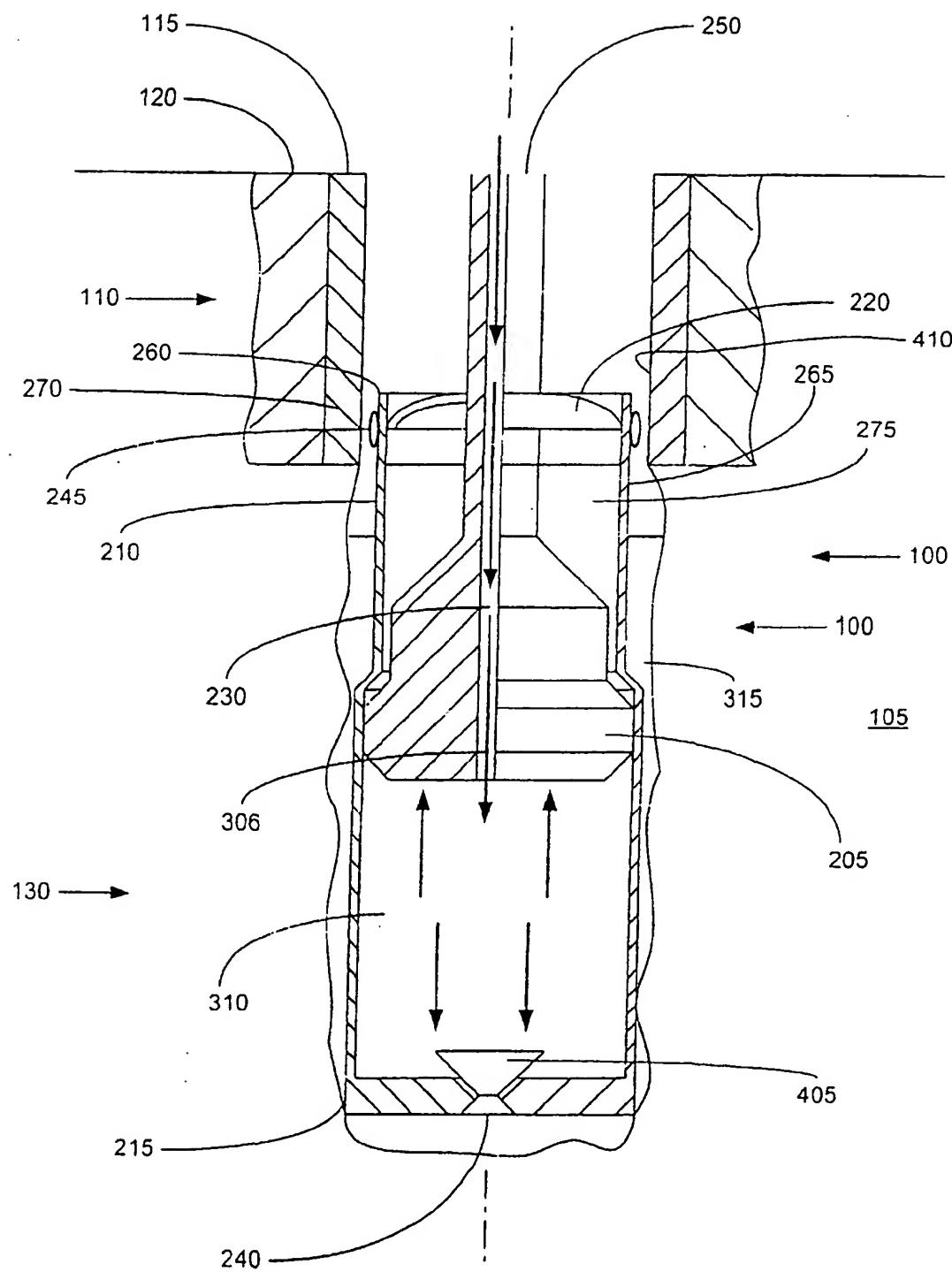


FIGURE 3a



FIGURĒ 4

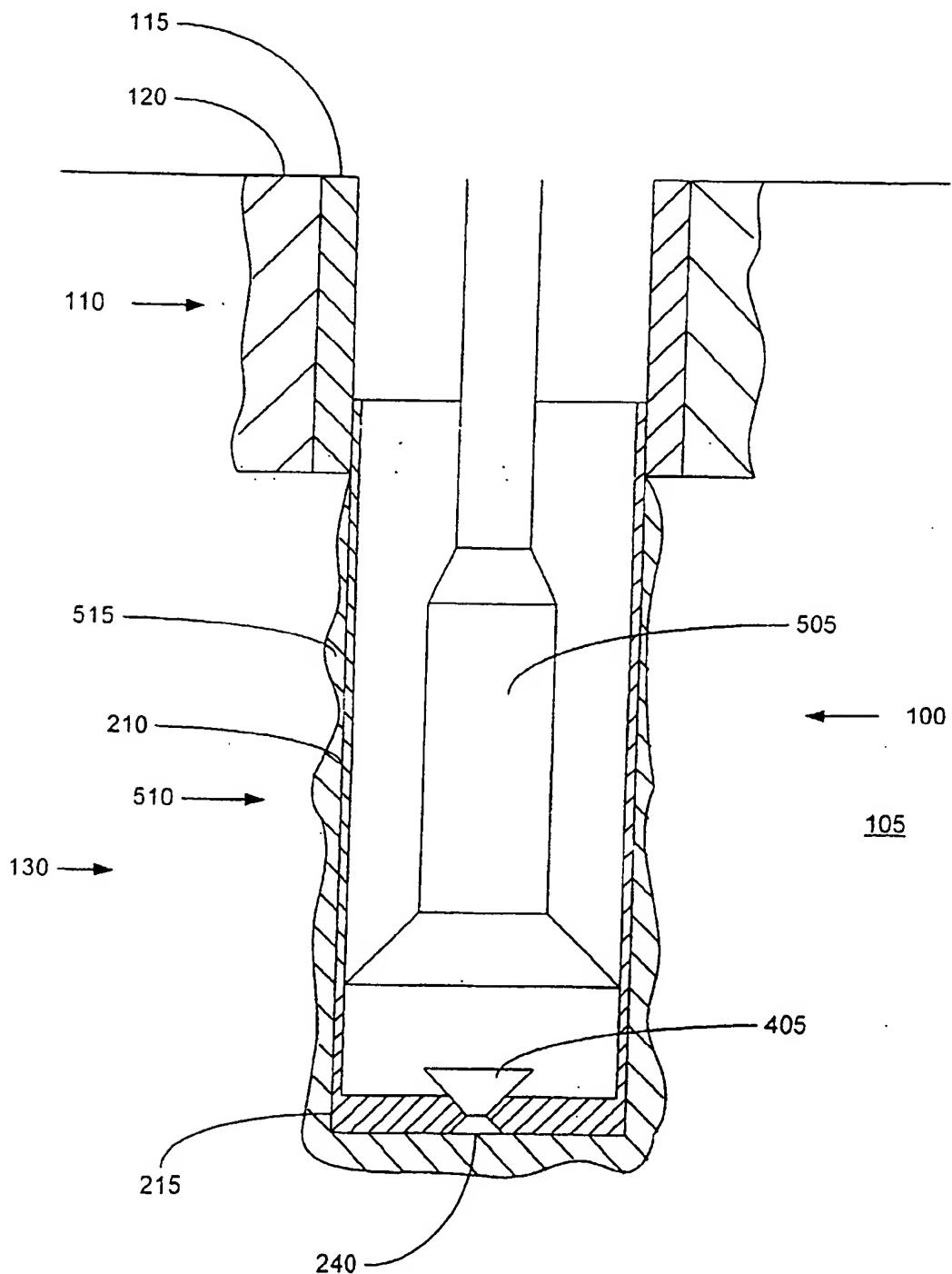


FIGURE 5

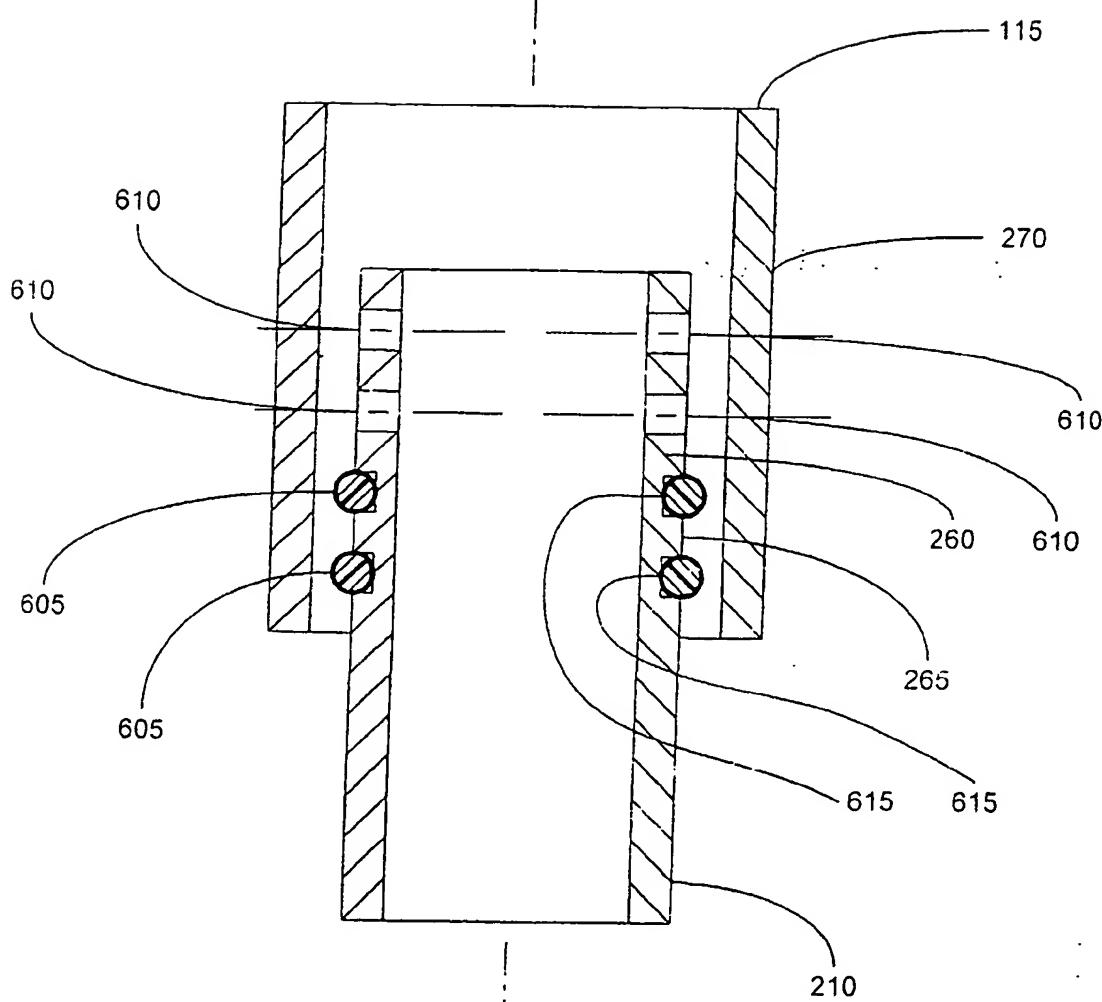


FIGURE 6-

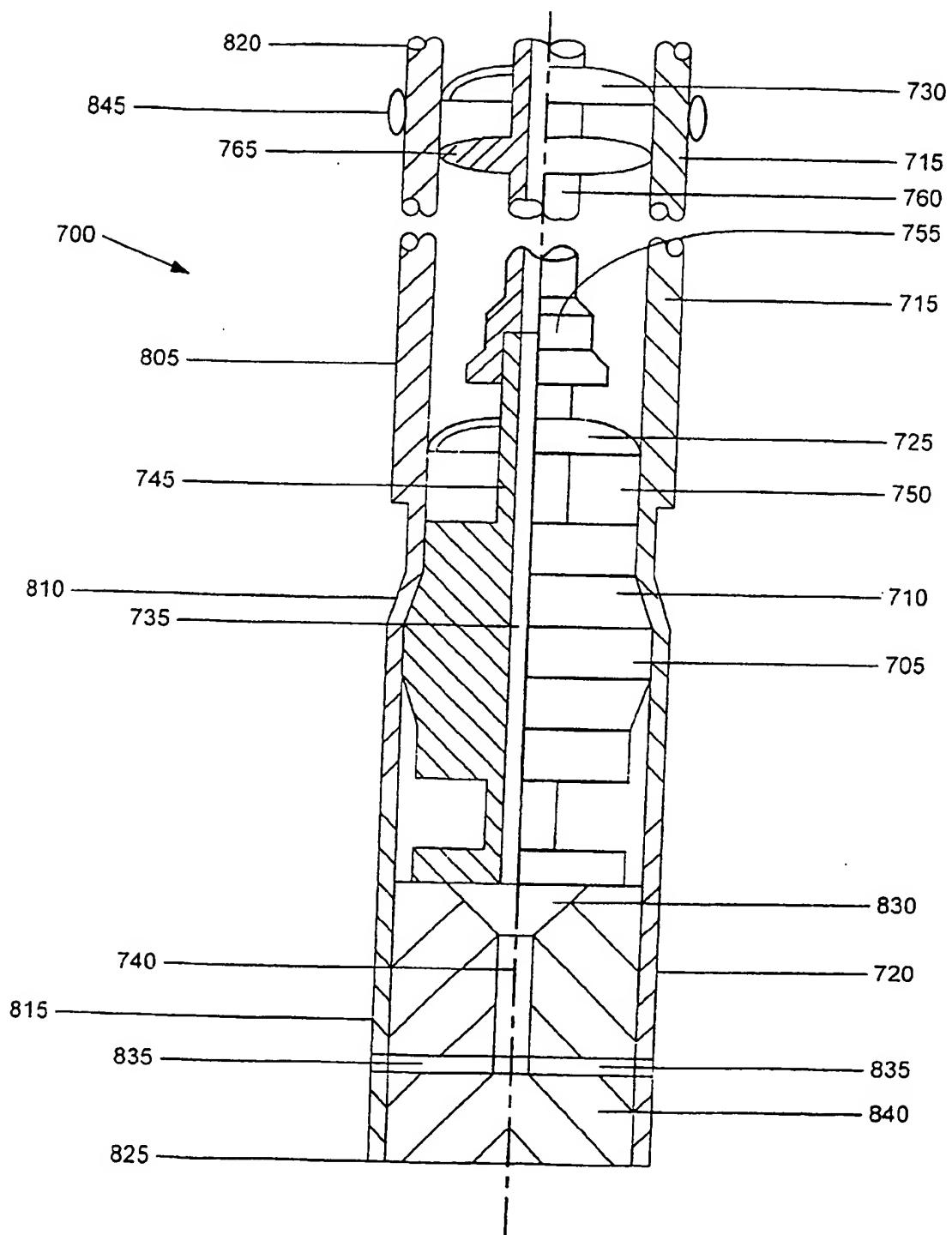
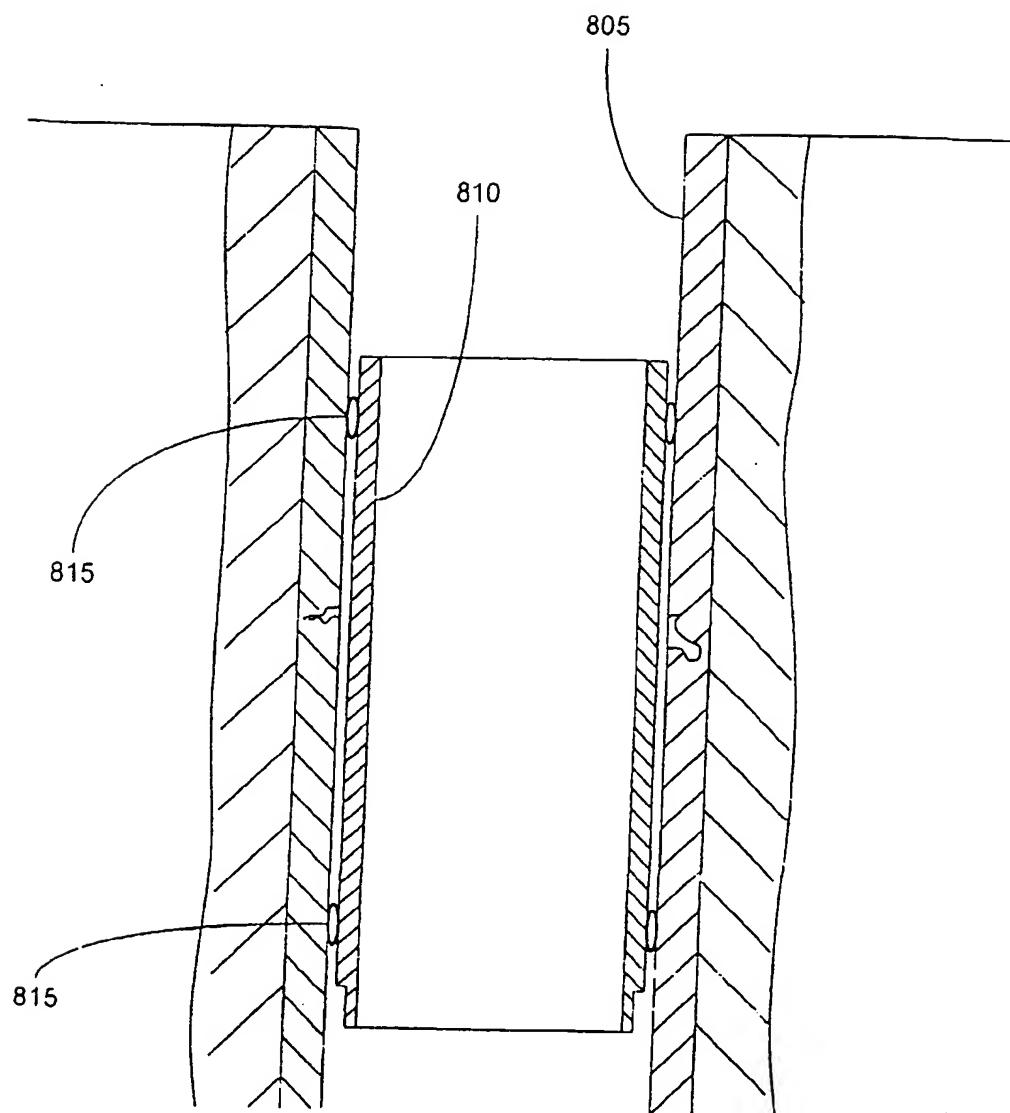


FIGURE 7



FIGURE\_8

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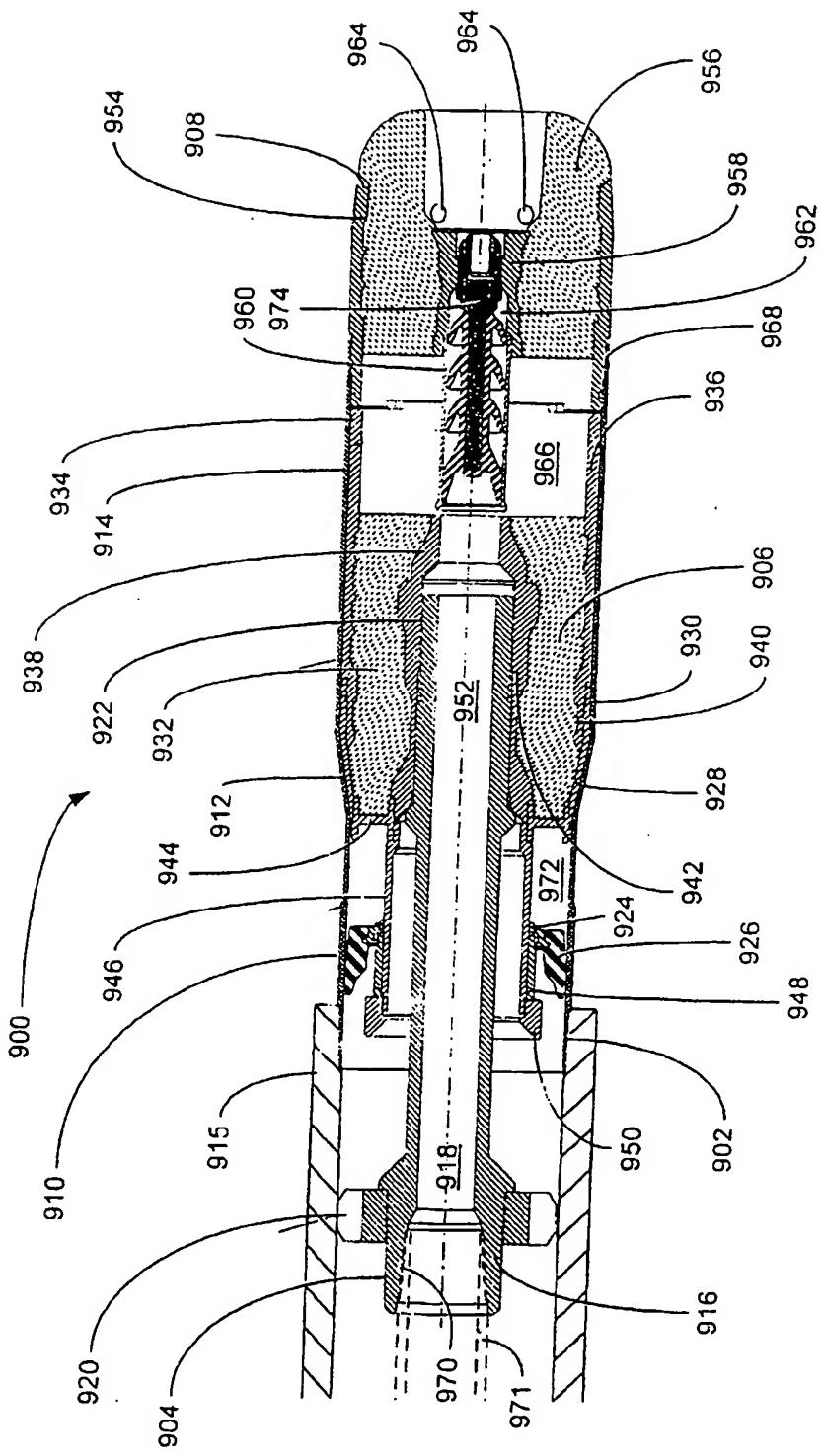


FIGURE 9

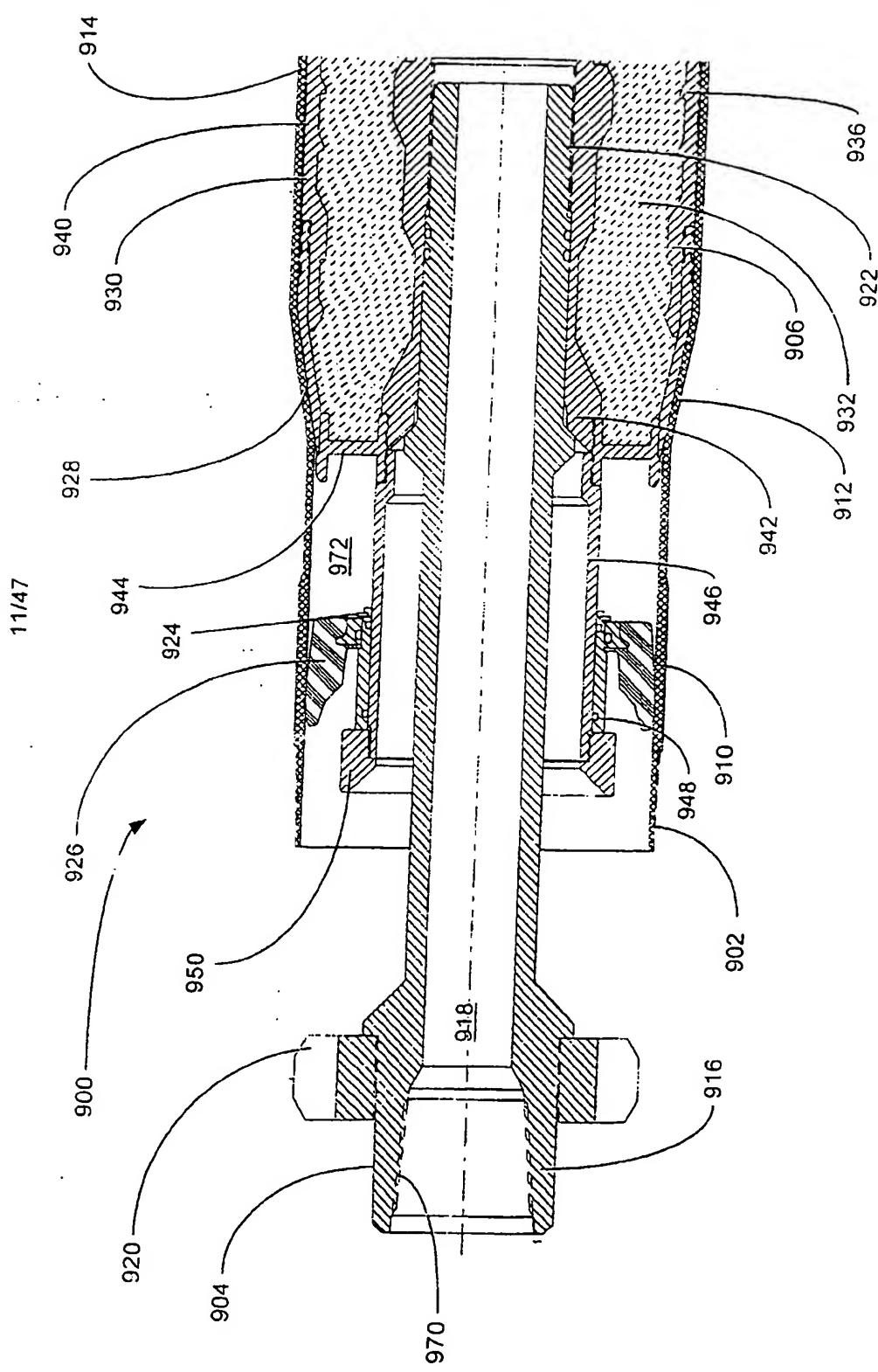


FIGURE 9a

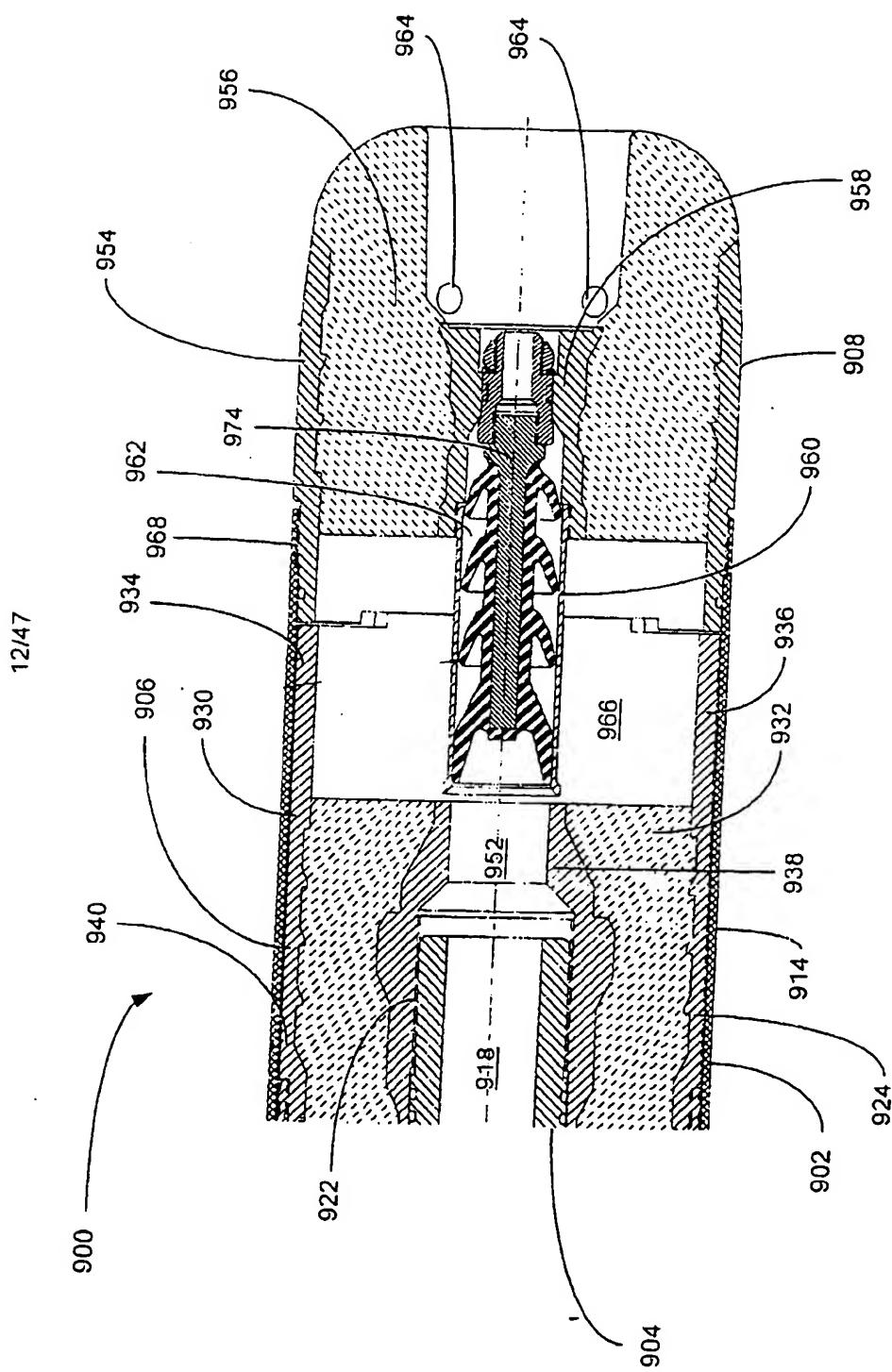


FIGURE 9b

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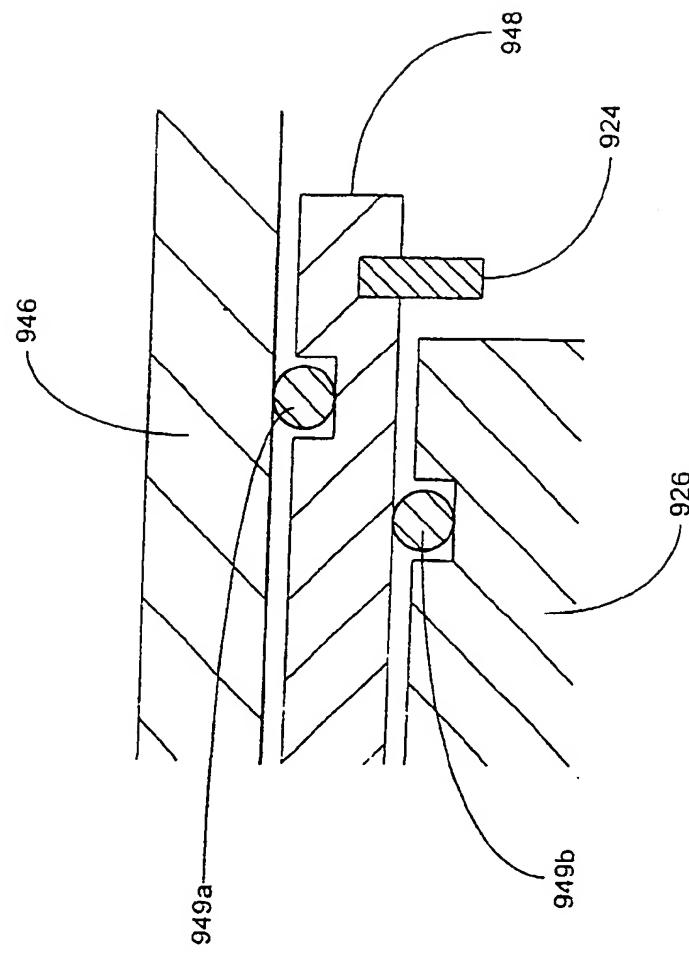


FIGURE 9C

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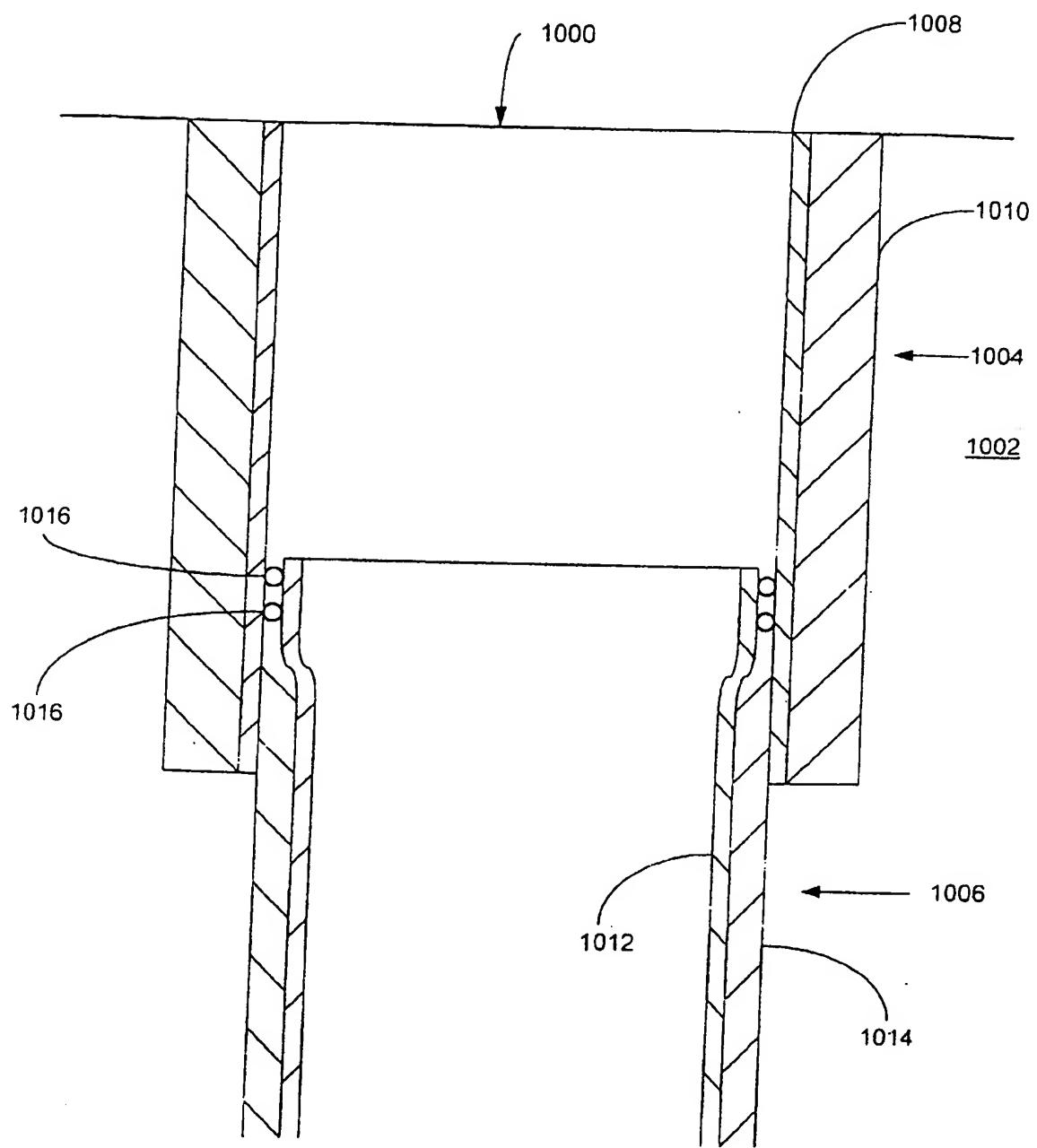


FIGURE-10a

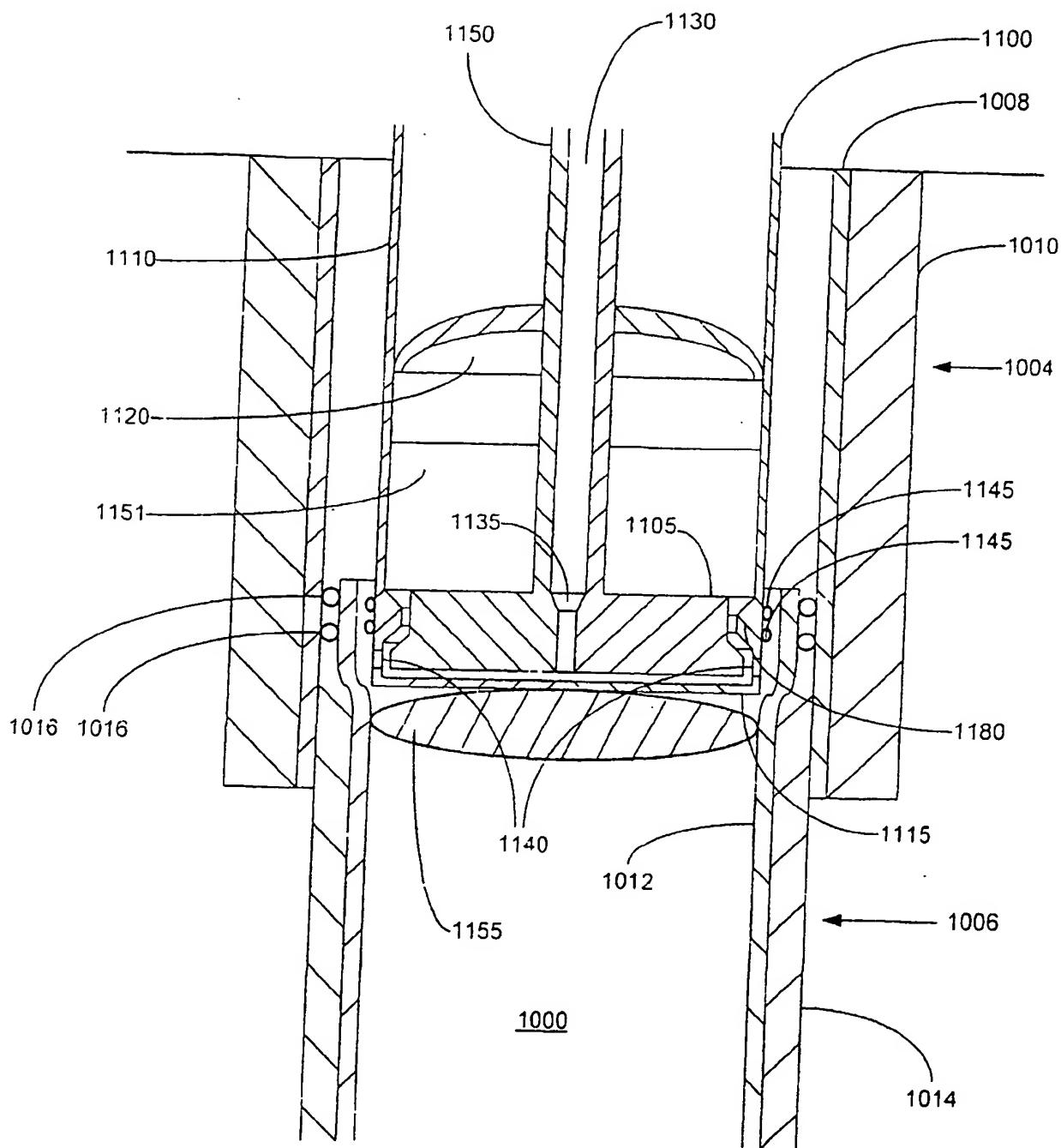


FIGURE 10b

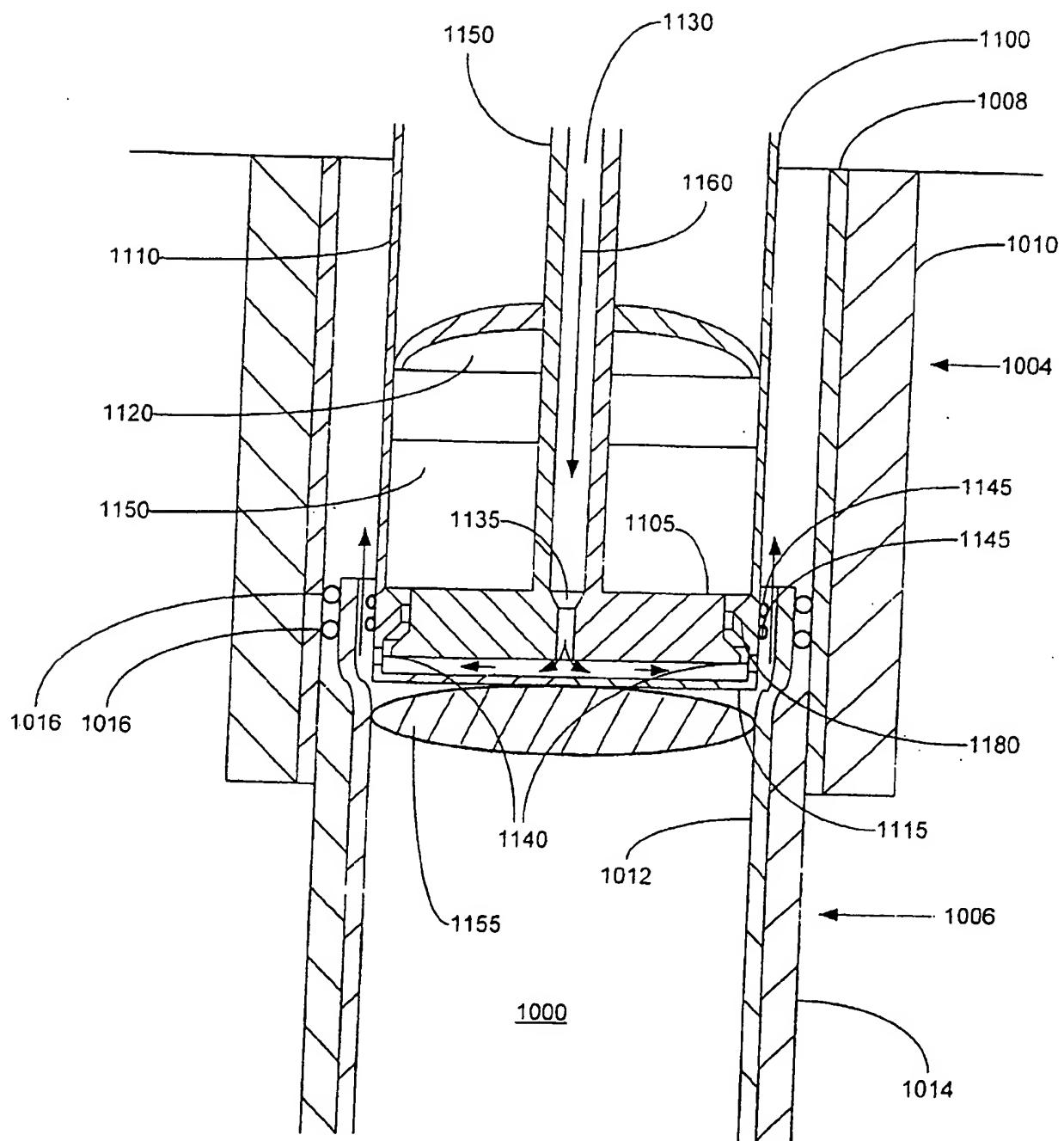


FIGURE 10c

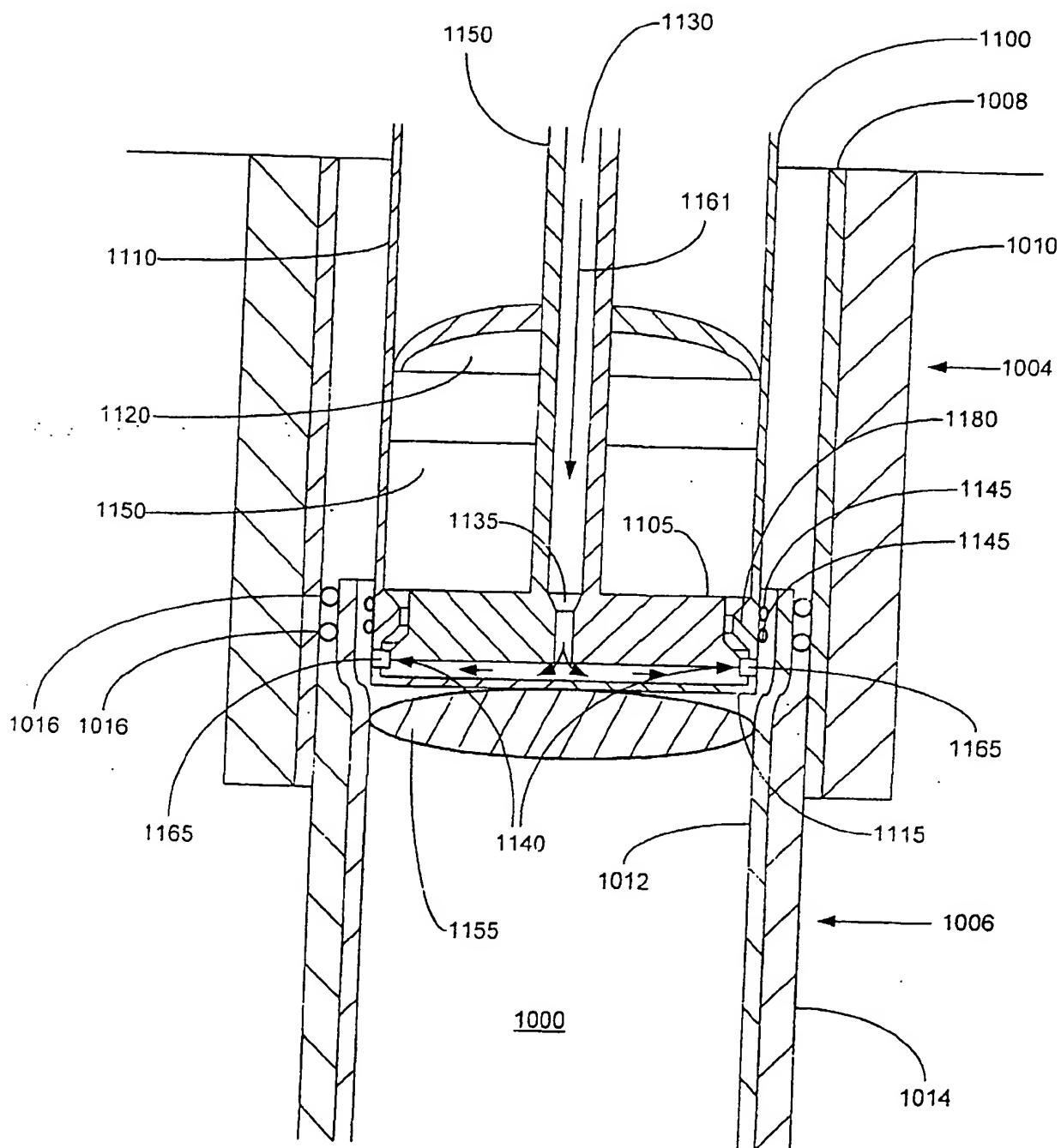


FIGURE 10d

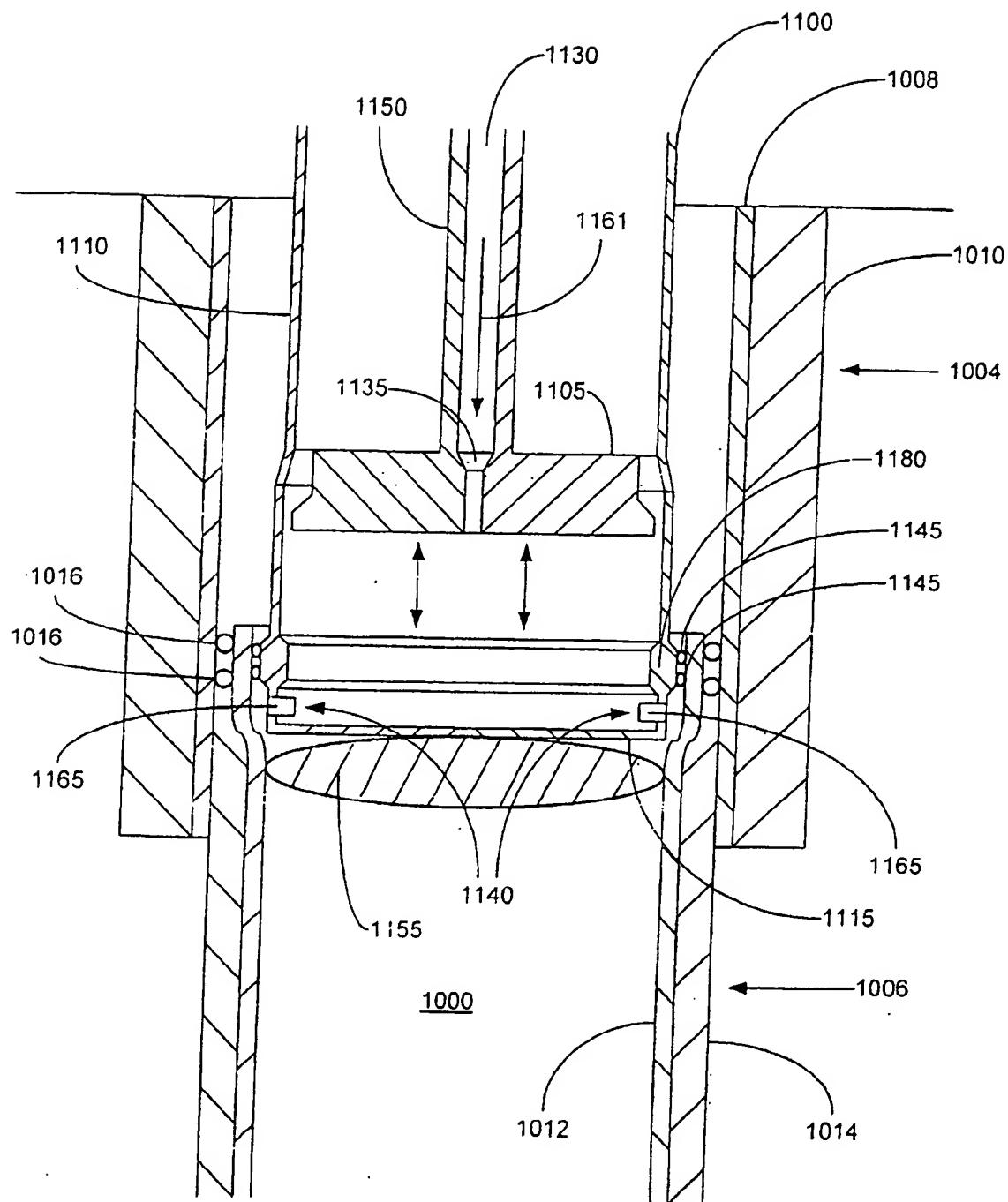


FIGURE 10e

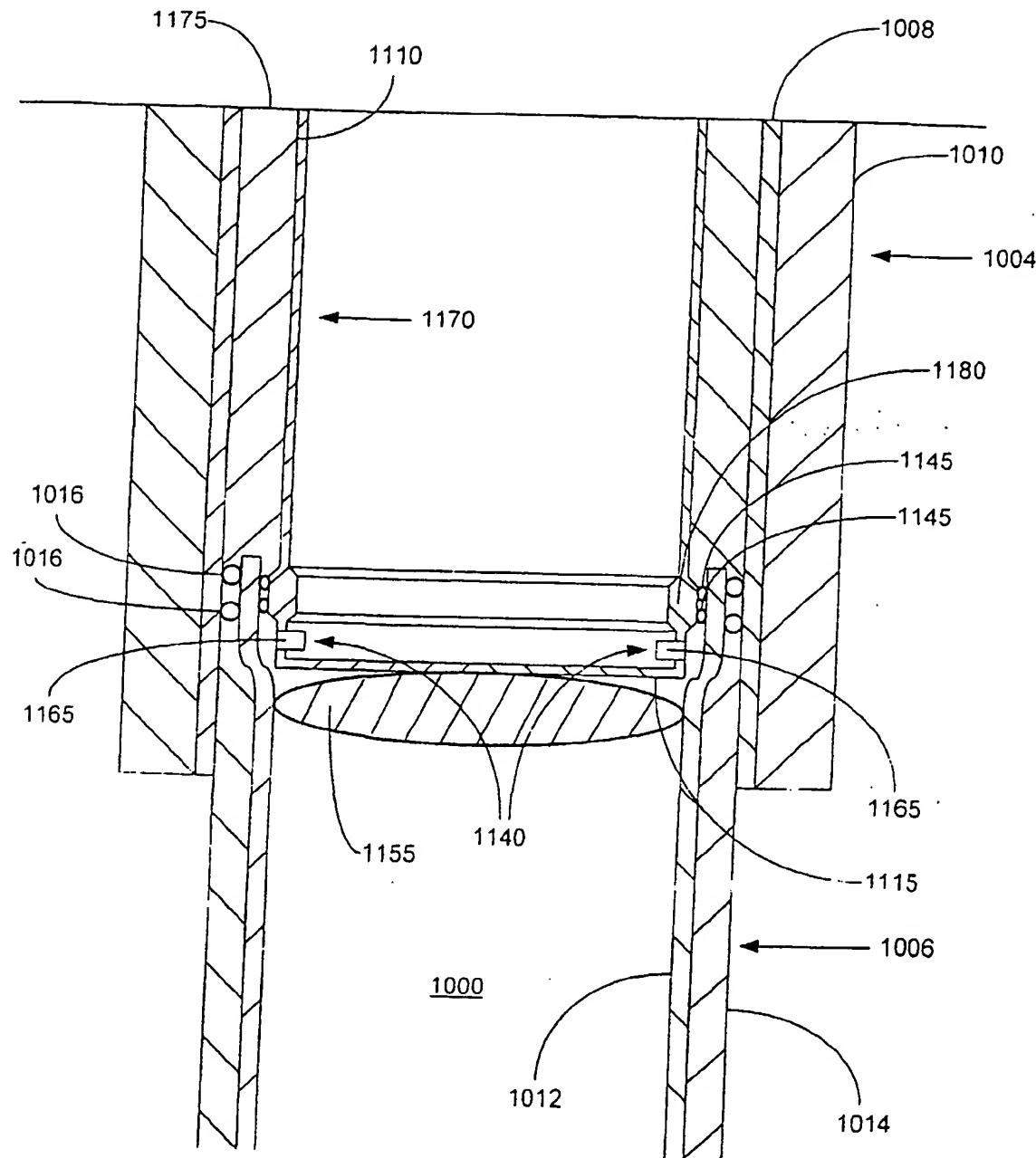


FIGURE 1Qf

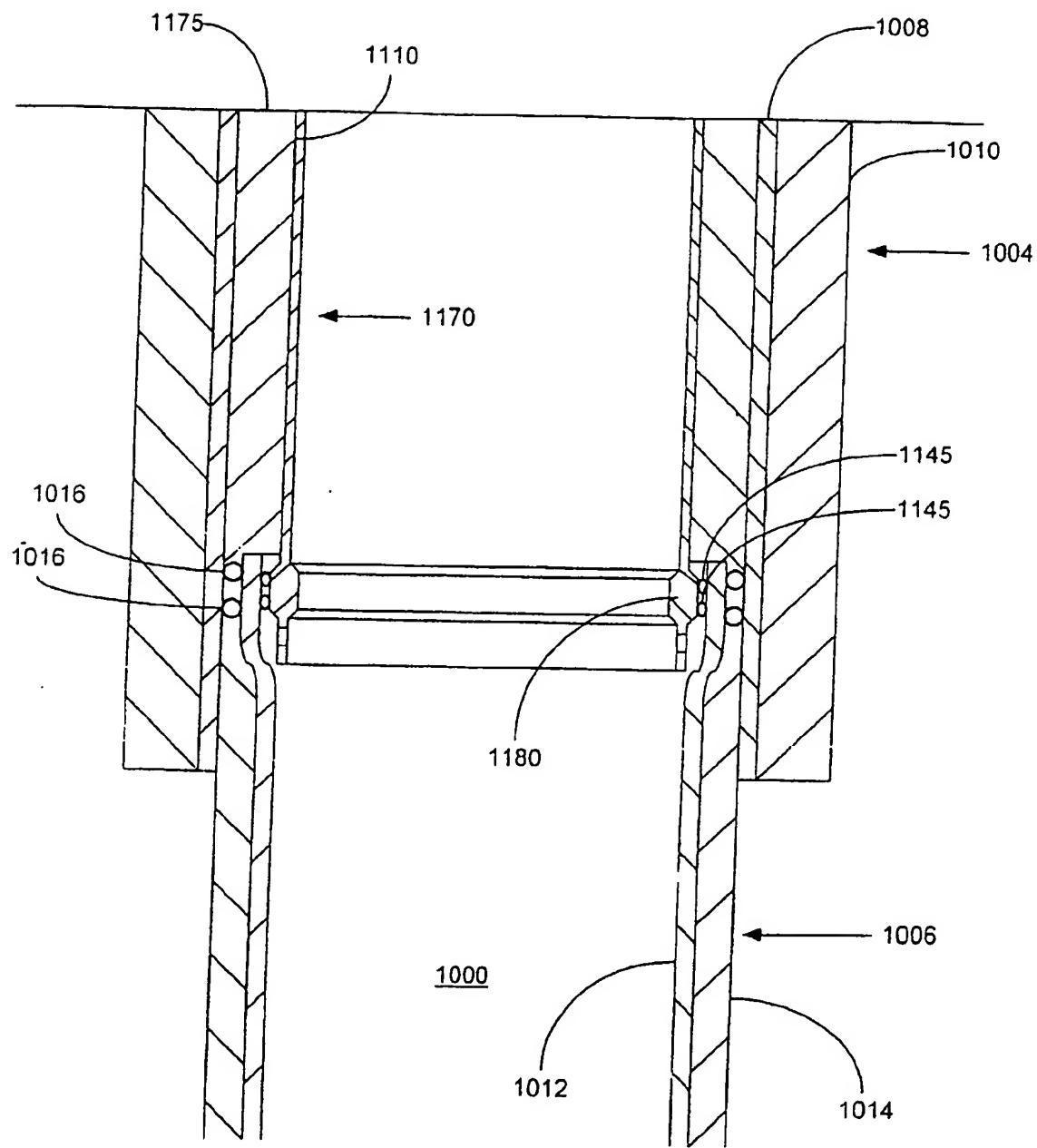


FIGURE 10g

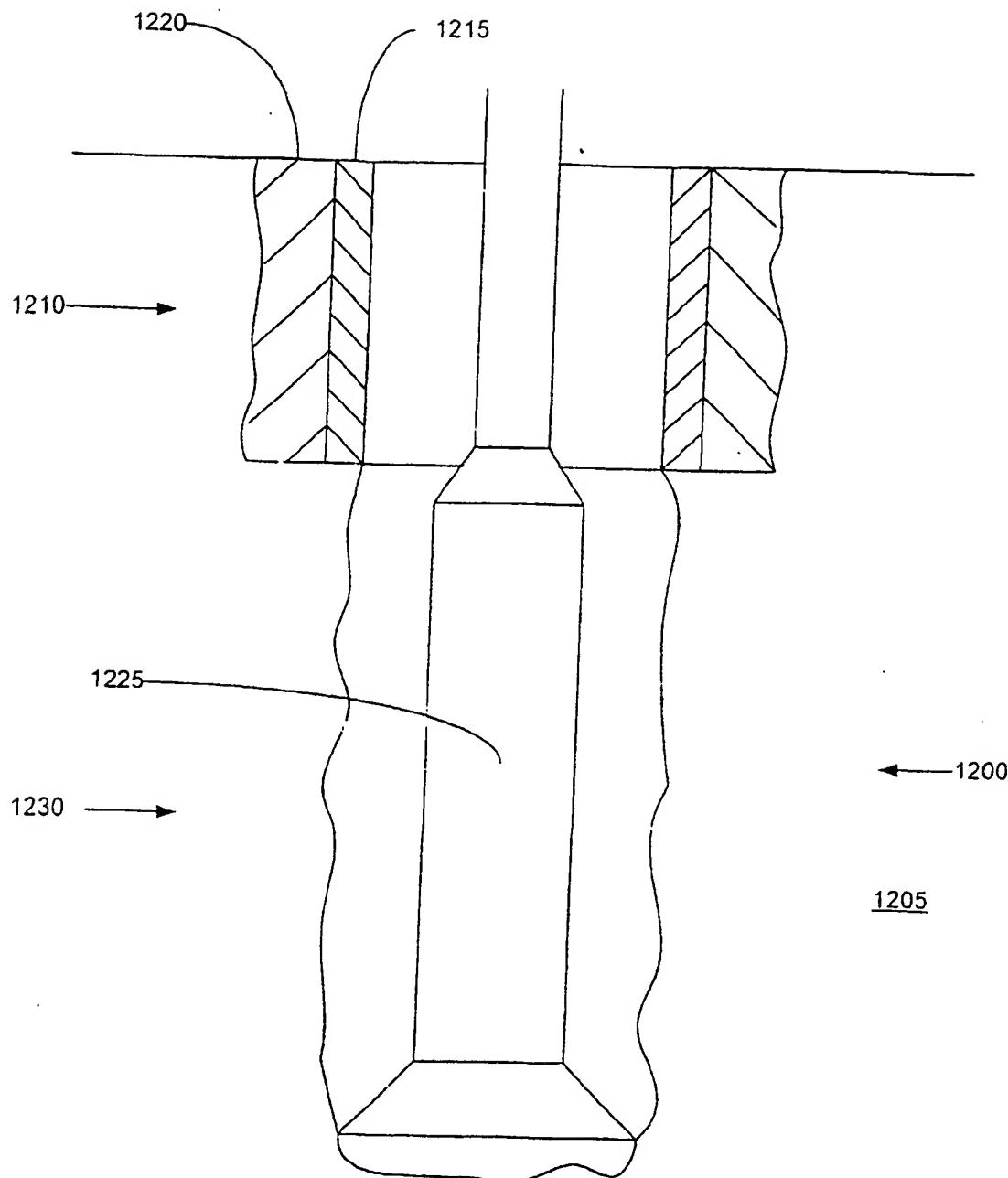
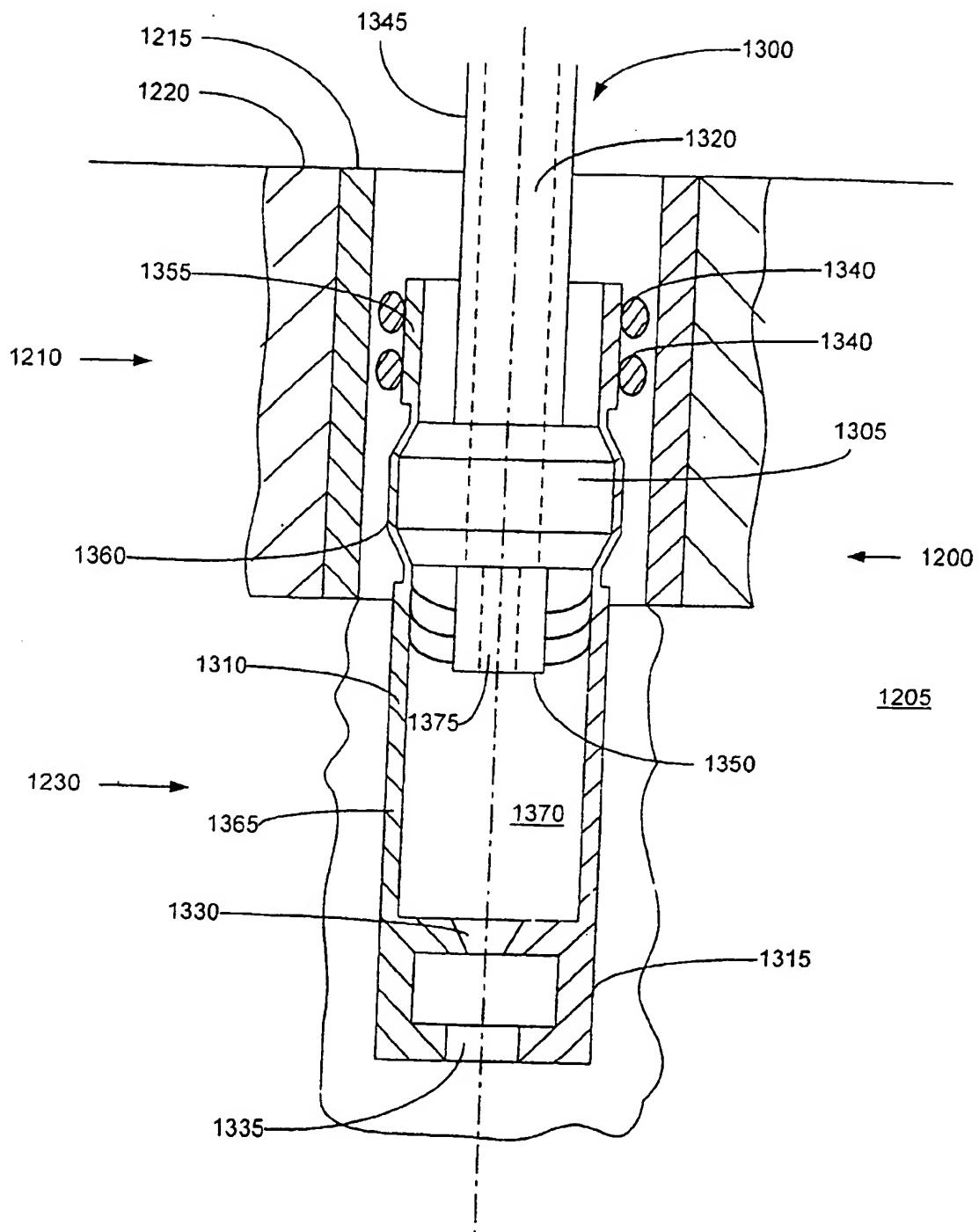


FIGURE 11a



**FIGURE 11b**

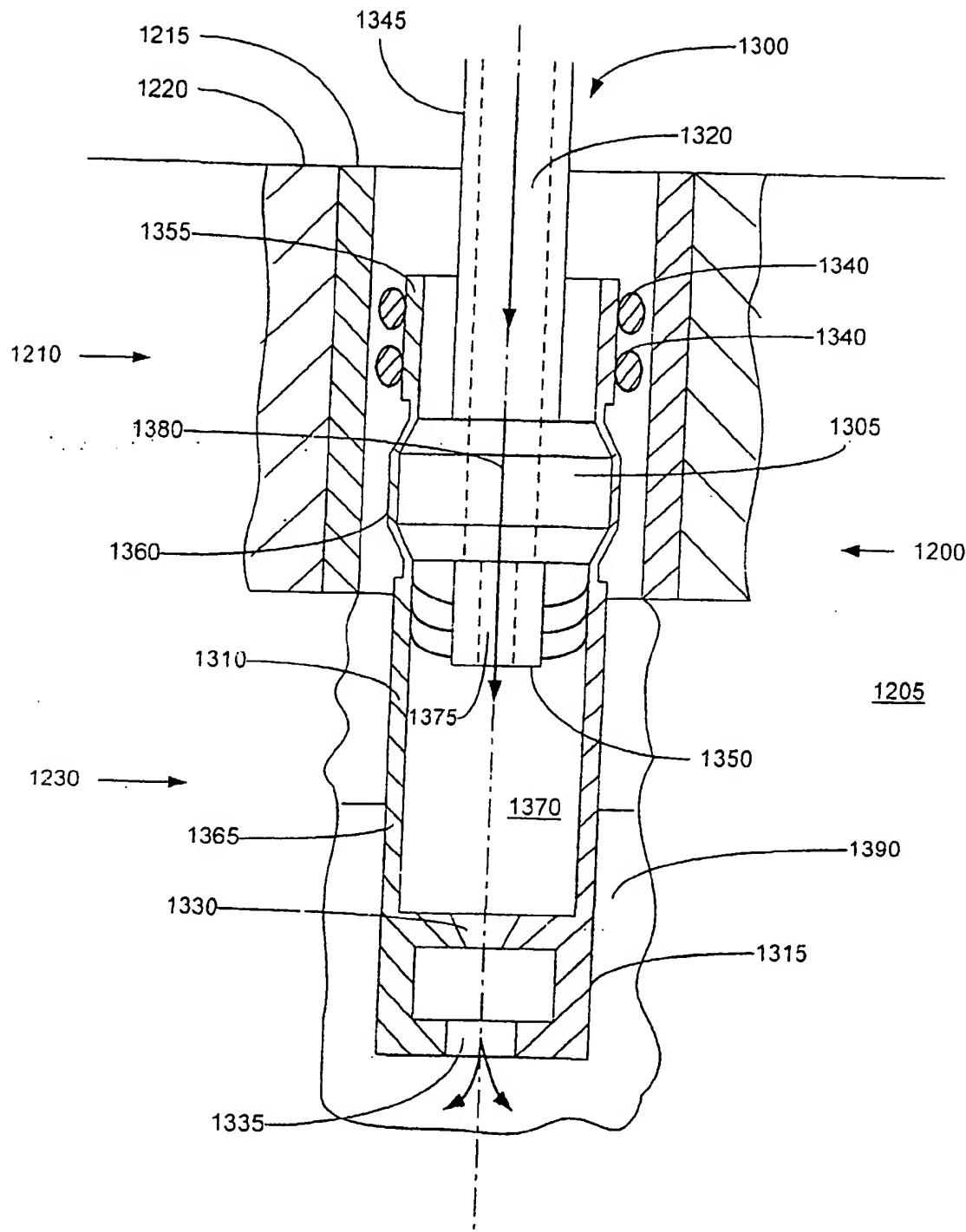


FIGURE 11c

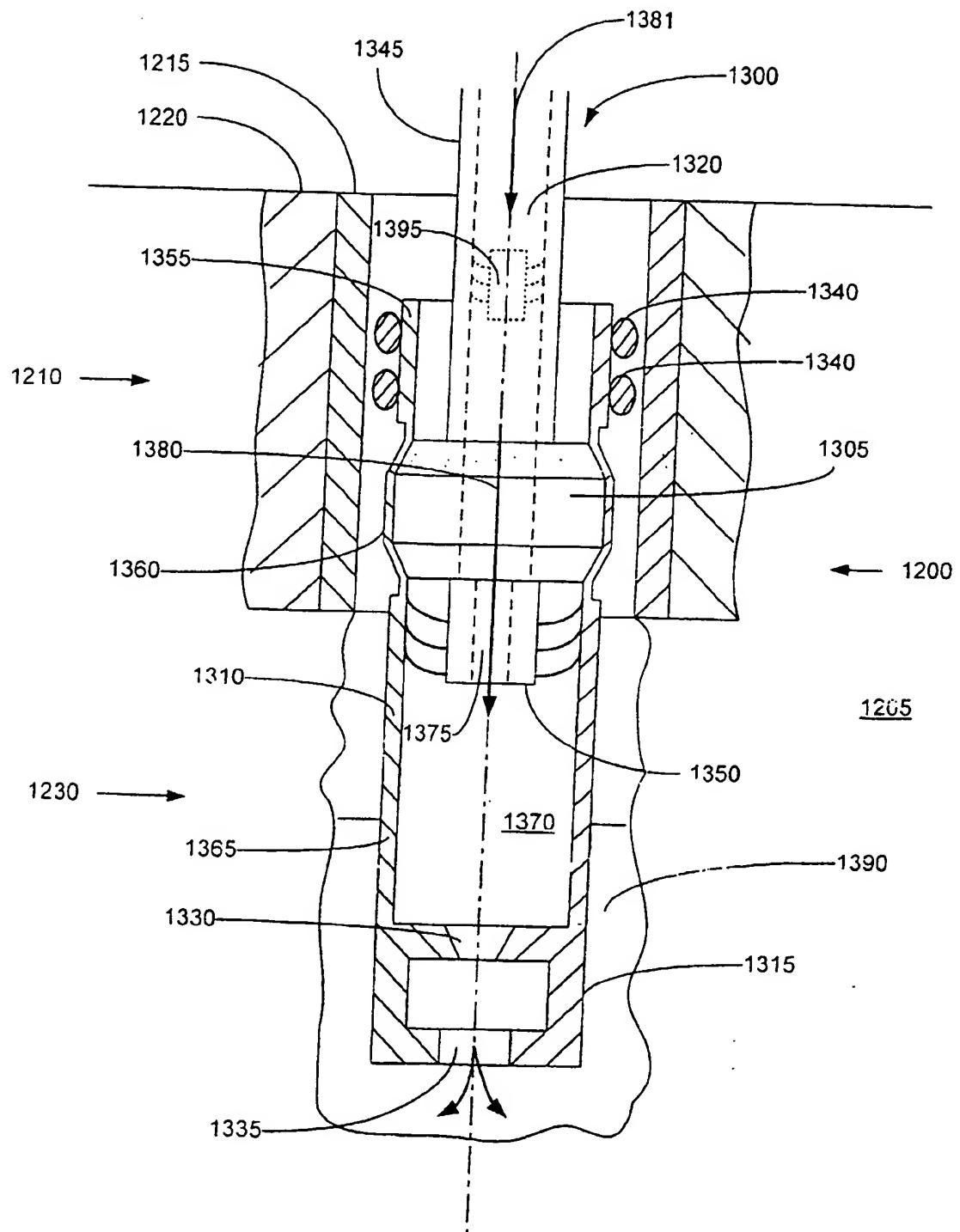


FIGURE 11d

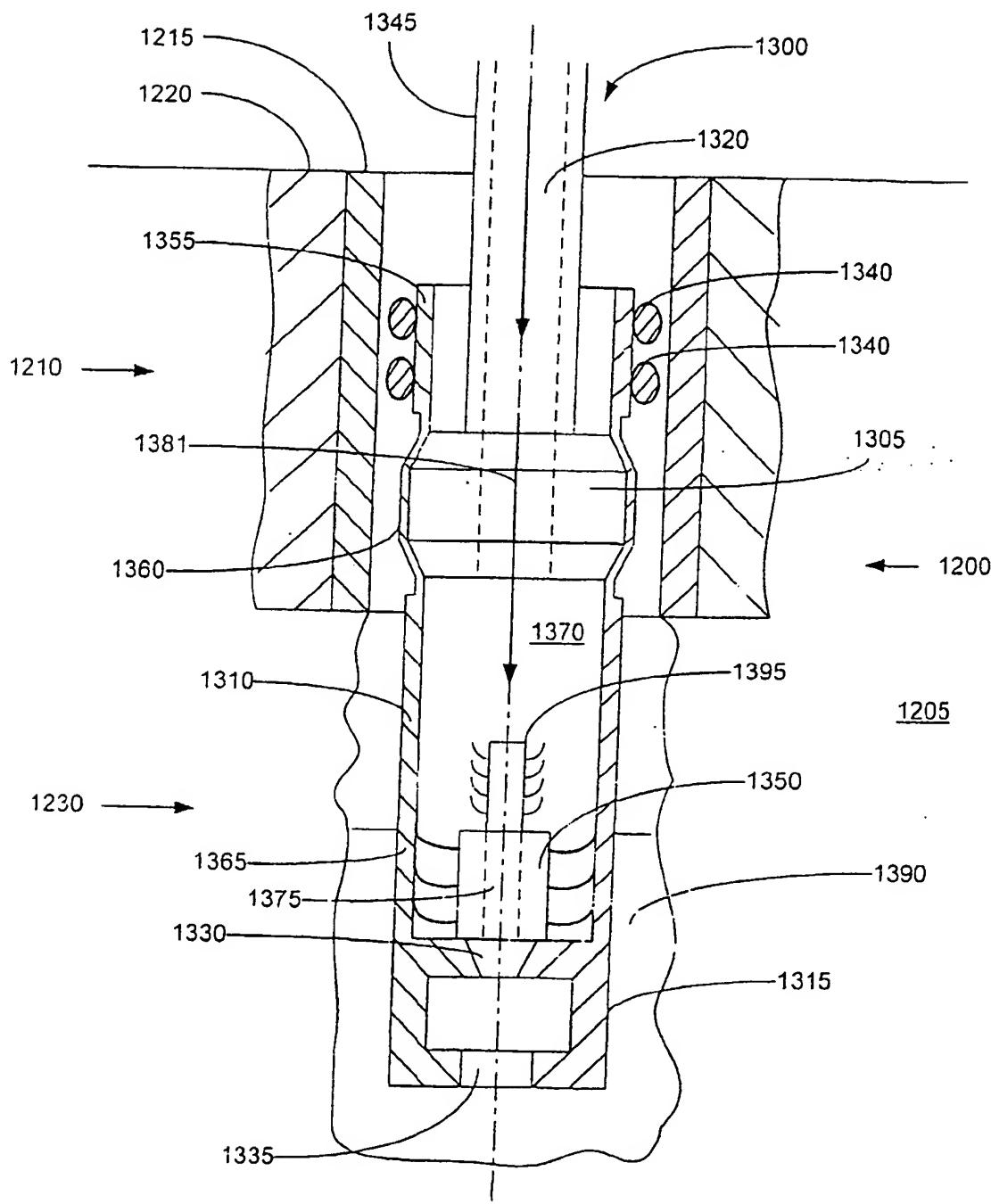


FIGURE 11e

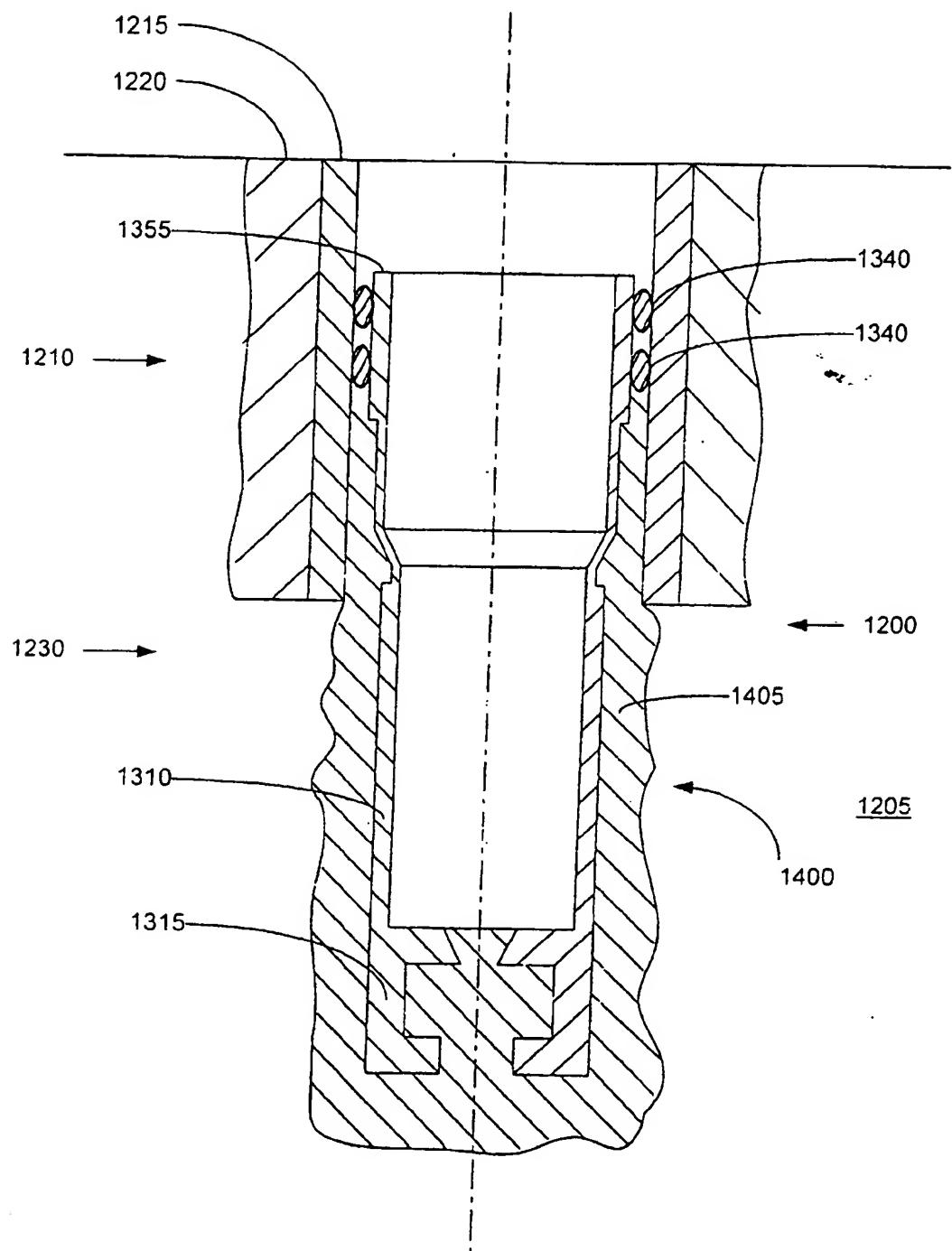


FIGURE 11f

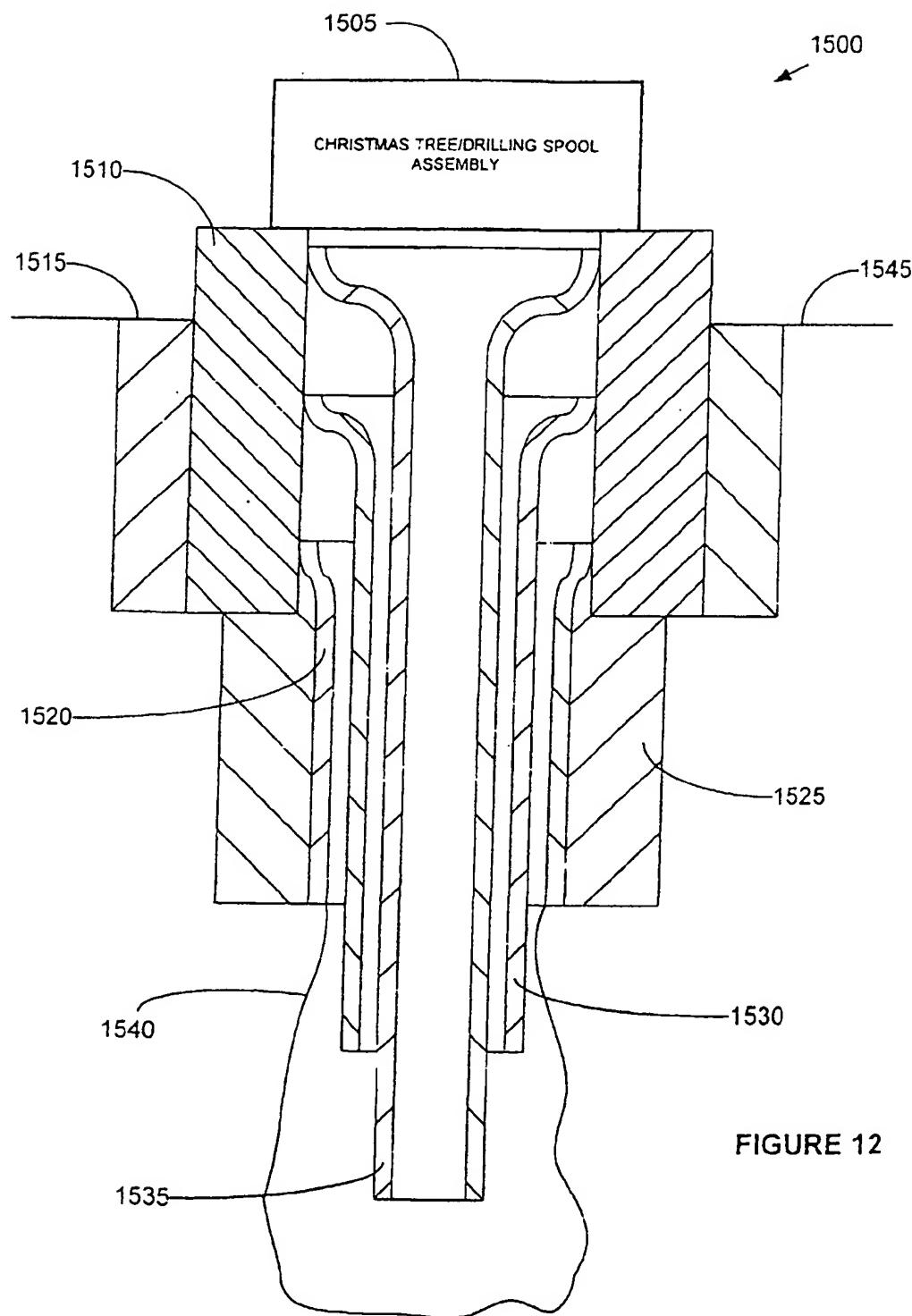


FIGURE 12

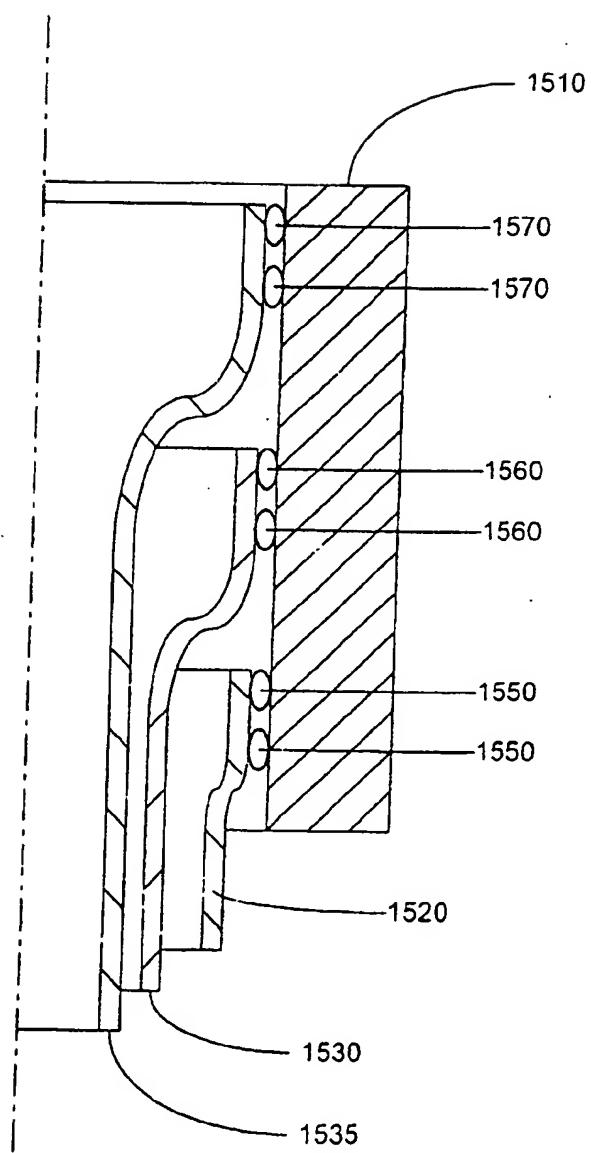


FIGURE 13

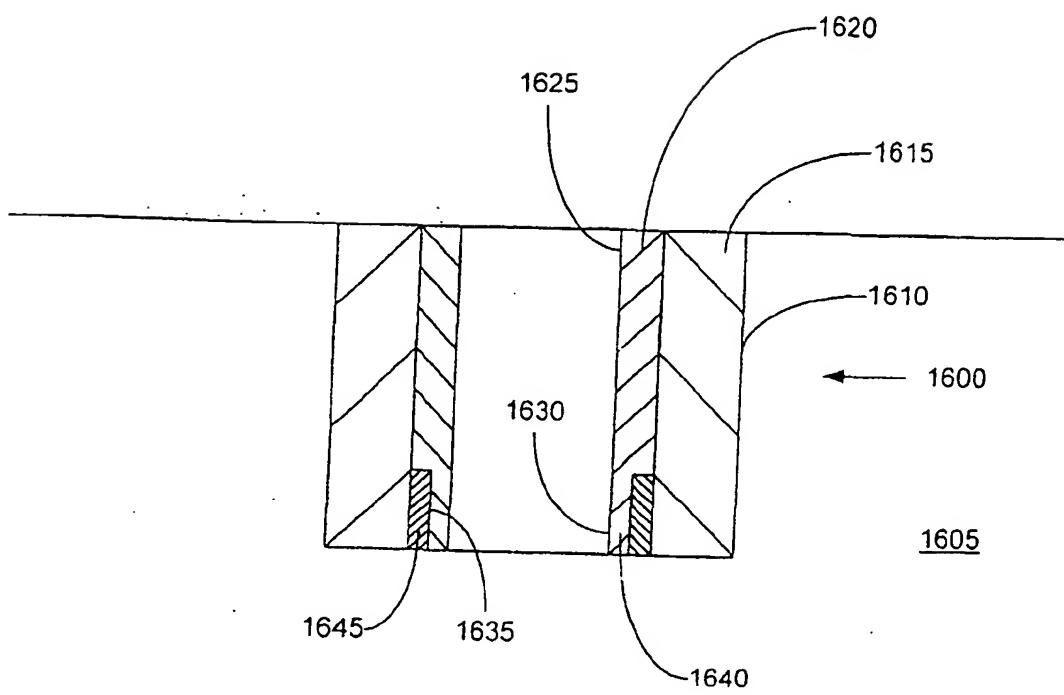
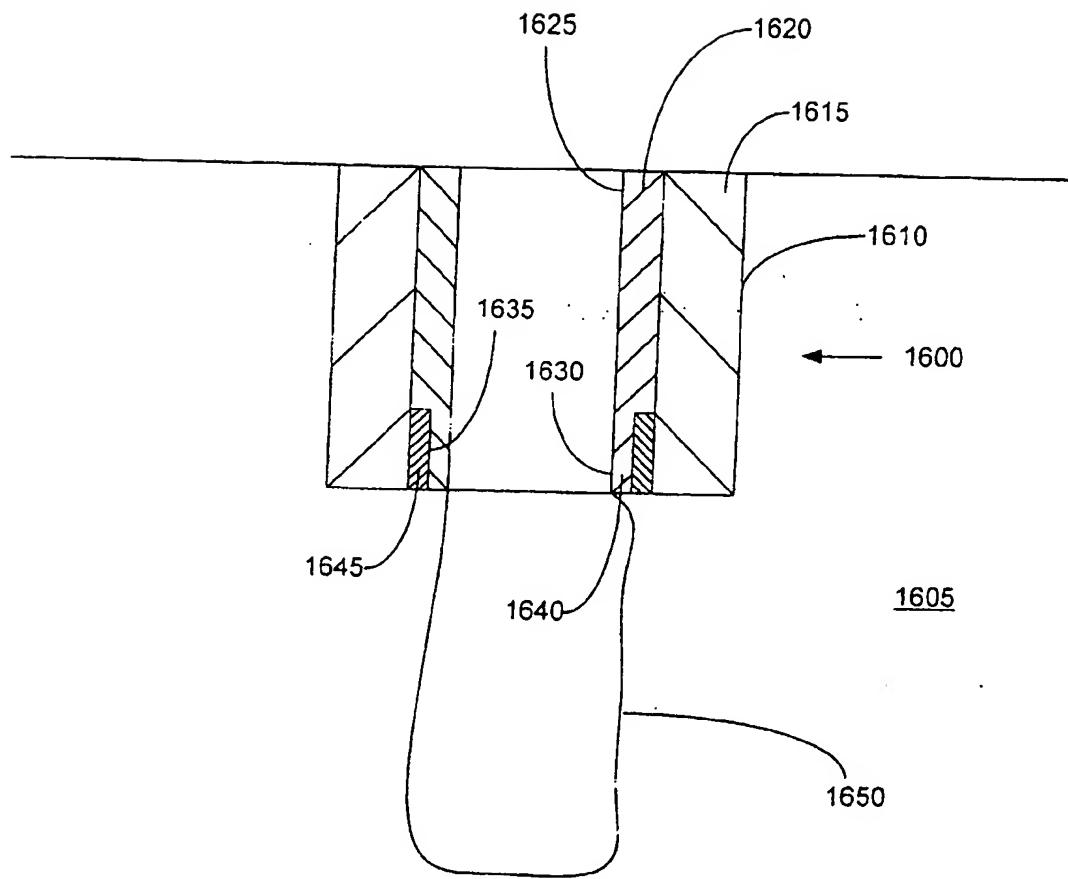


FIGURE 14a



**FIGURE 14b**

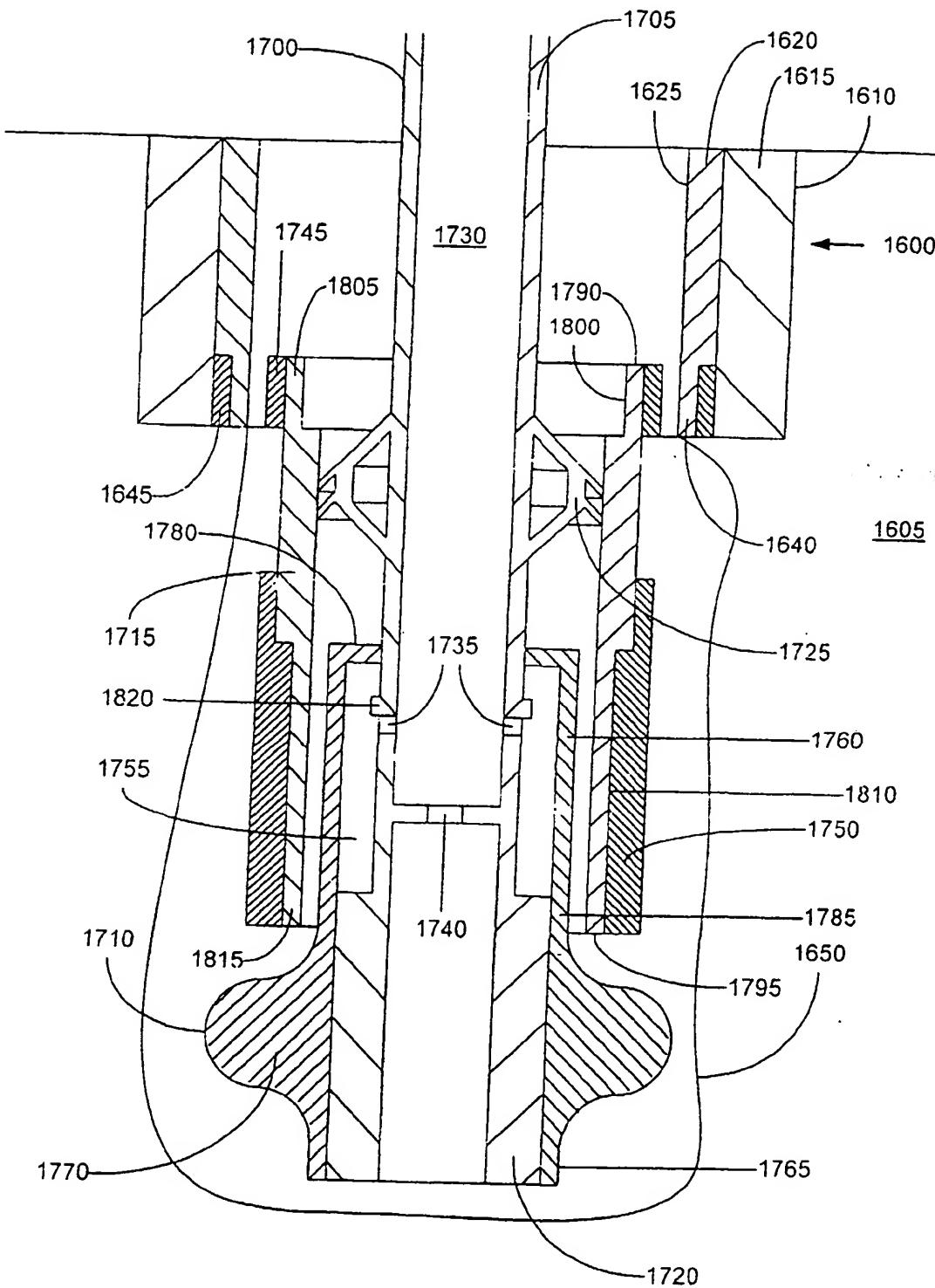


FIGURE 14c

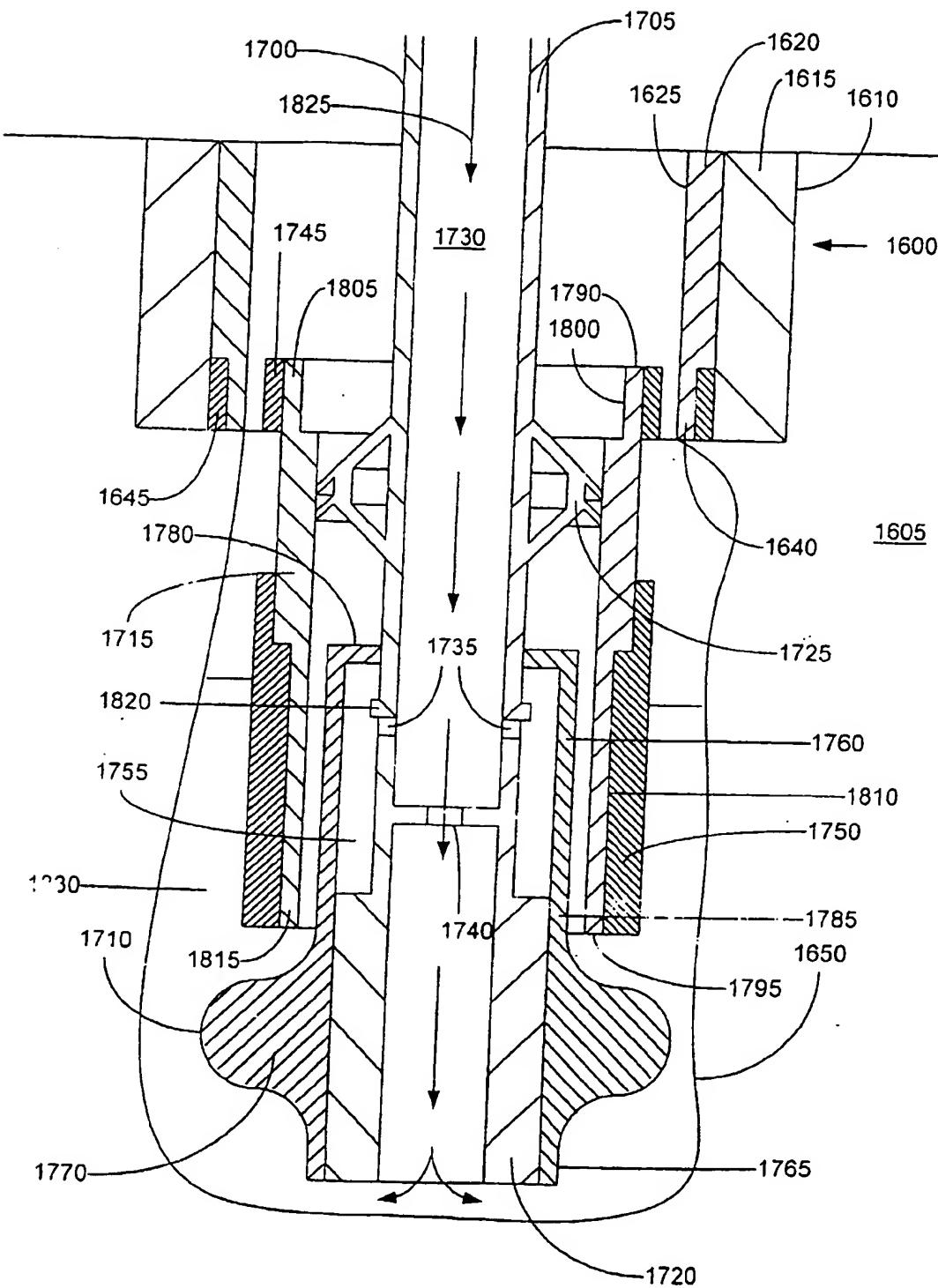


FIGURE 14d

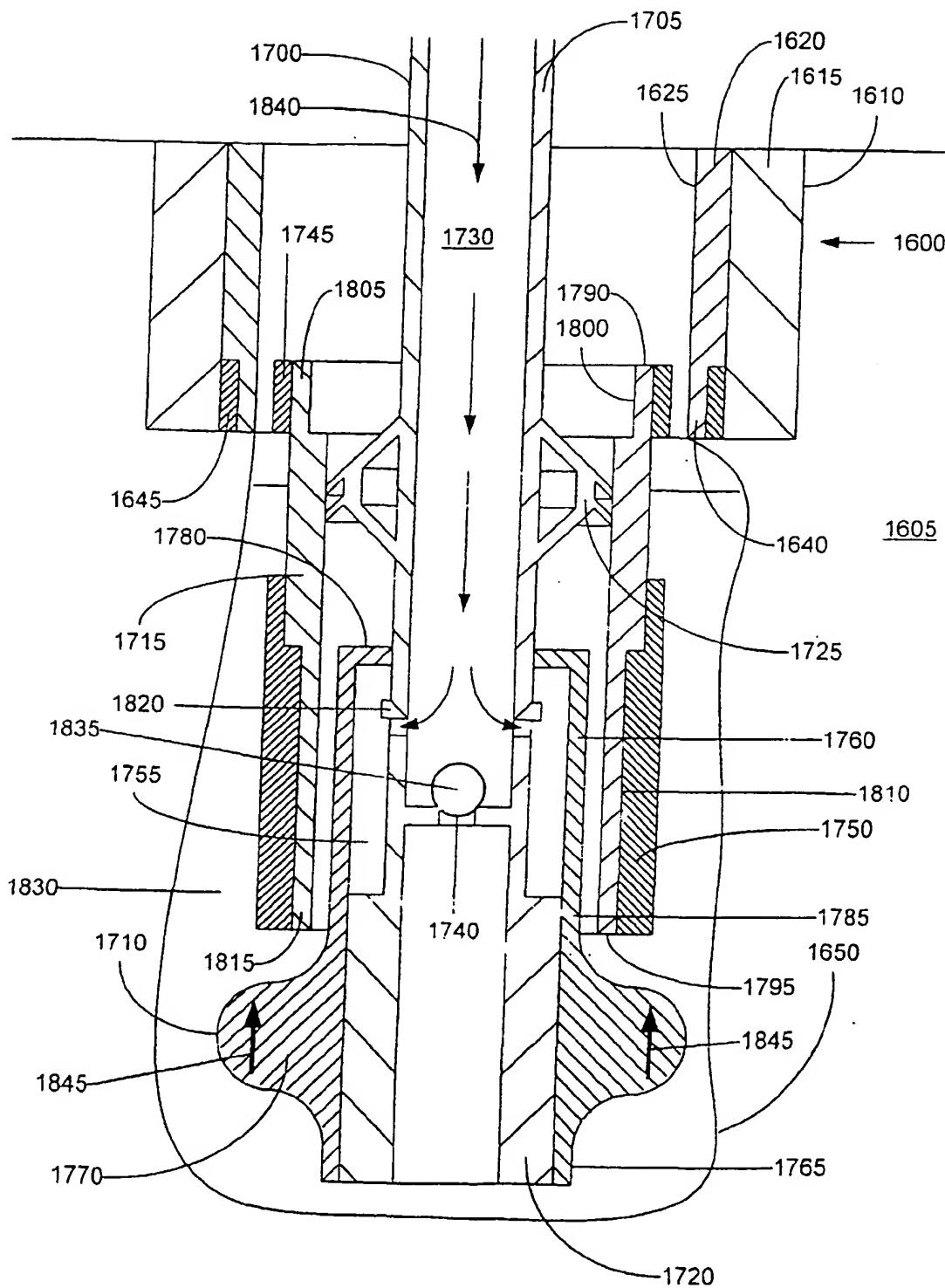


FIGURE 14e

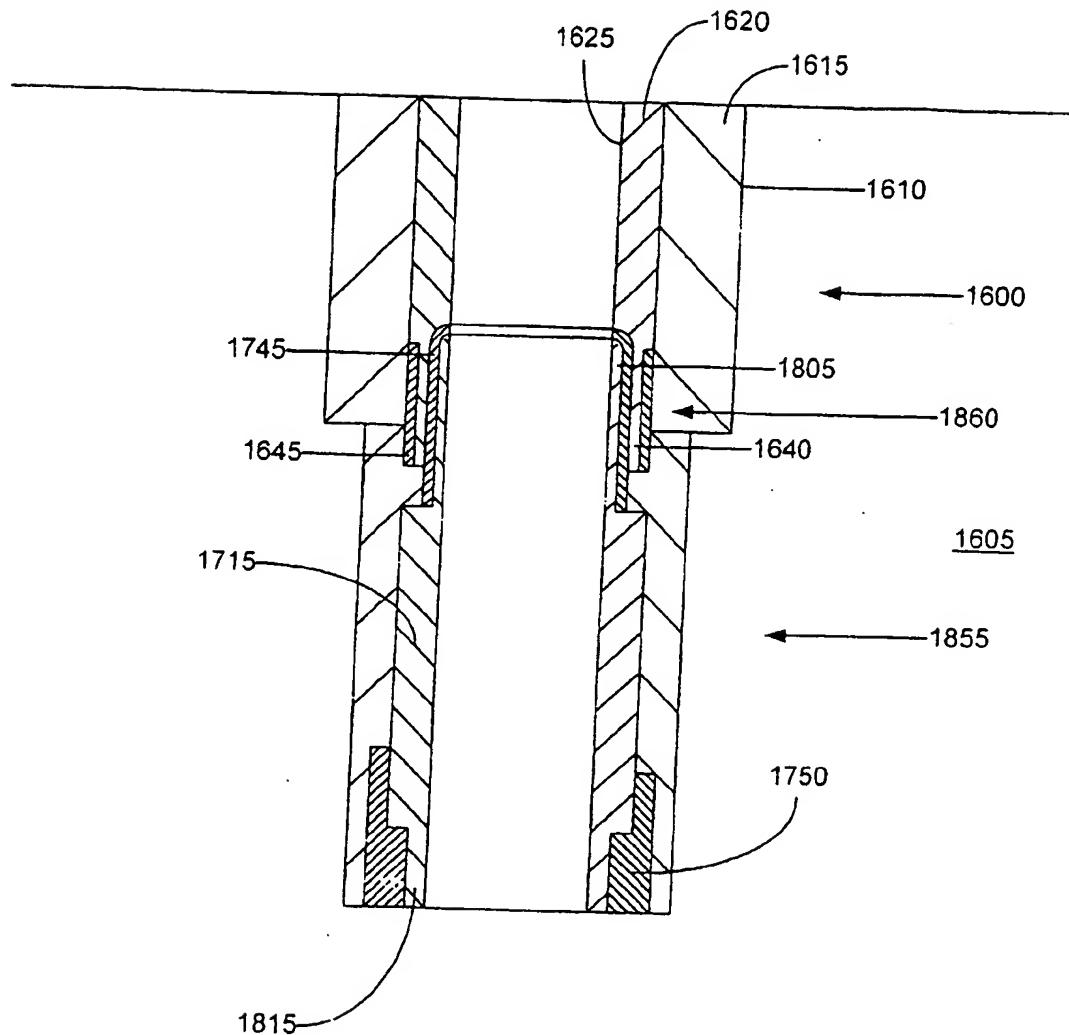


FIGURE 14f

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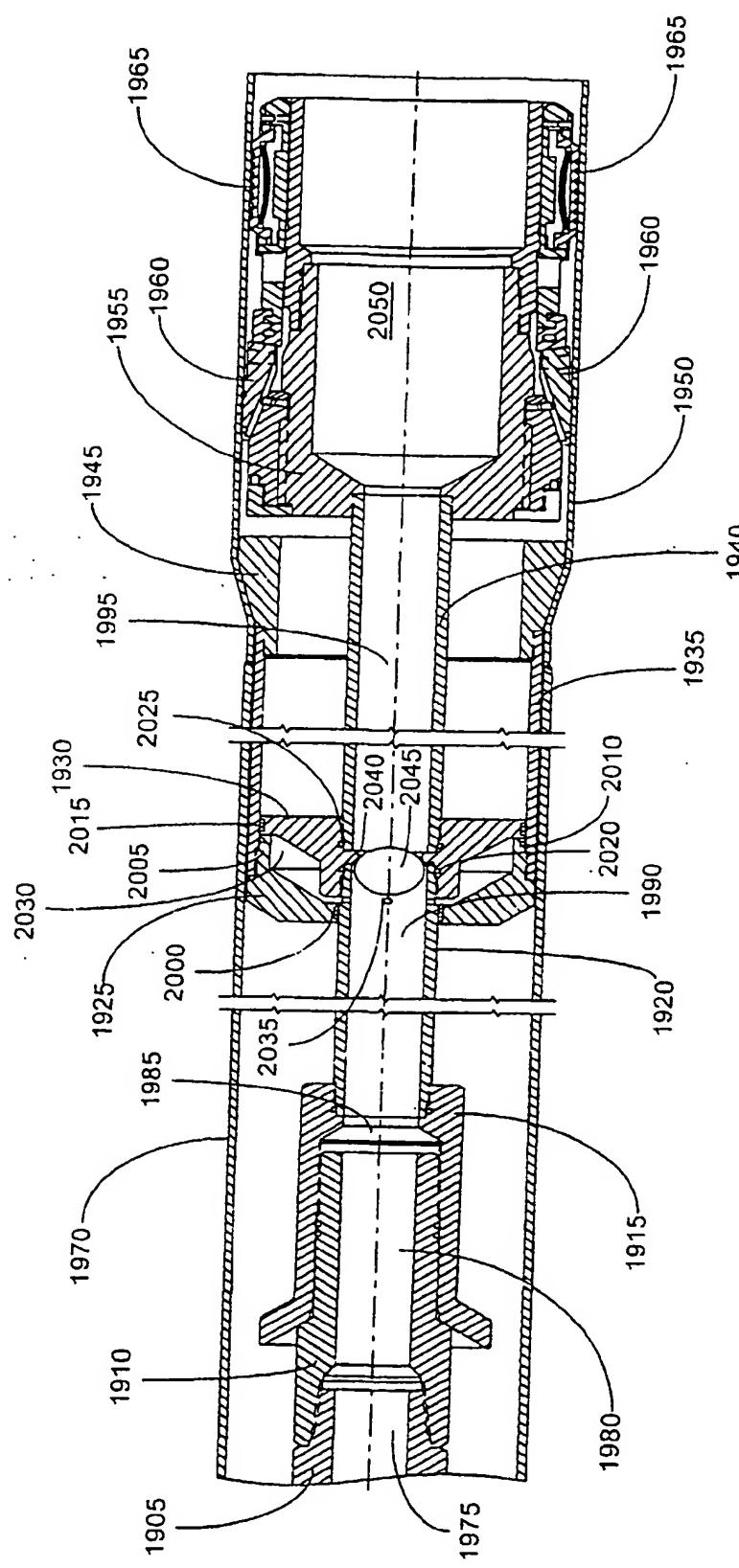


FIGURE 15

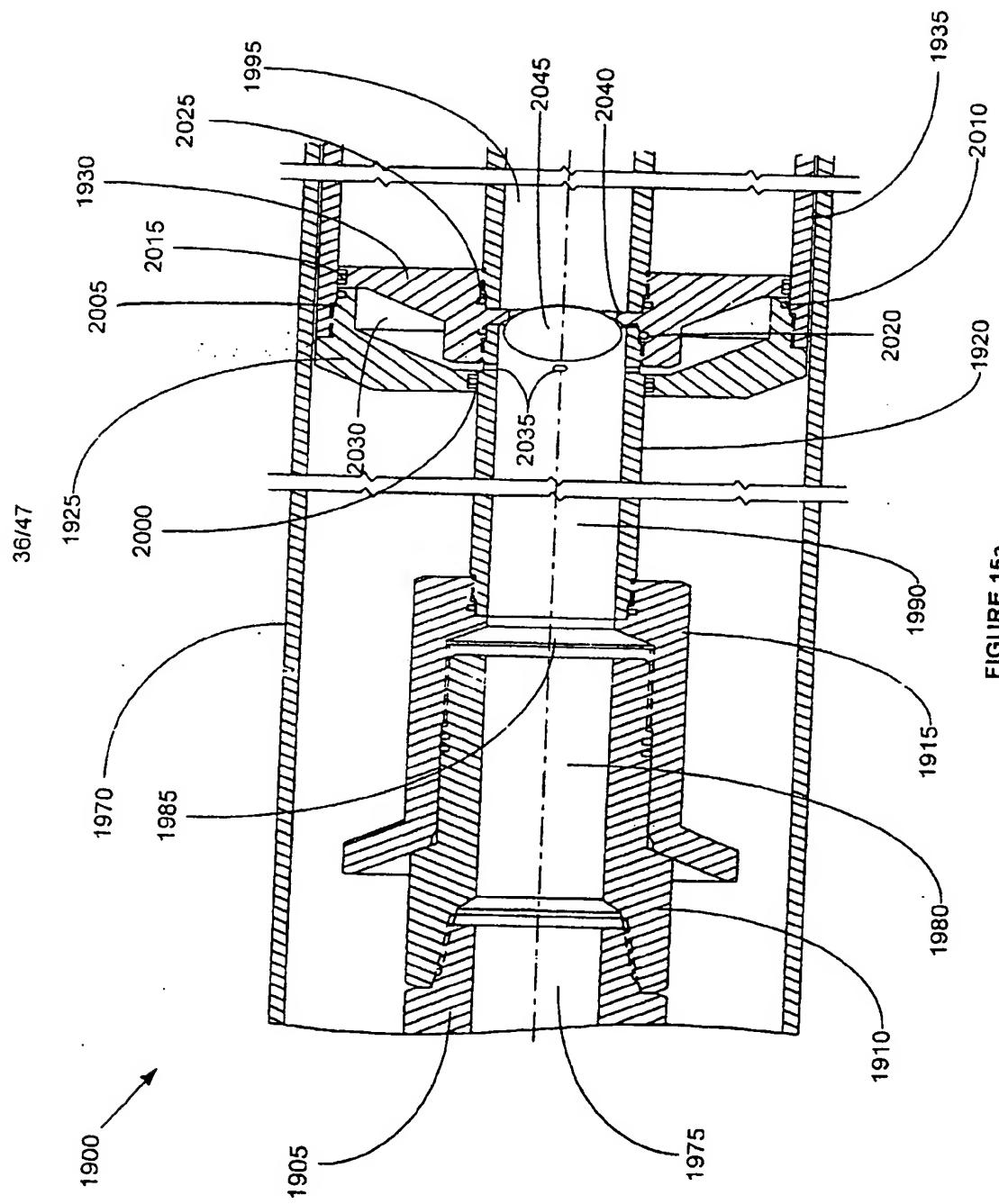


FIGURE 15a

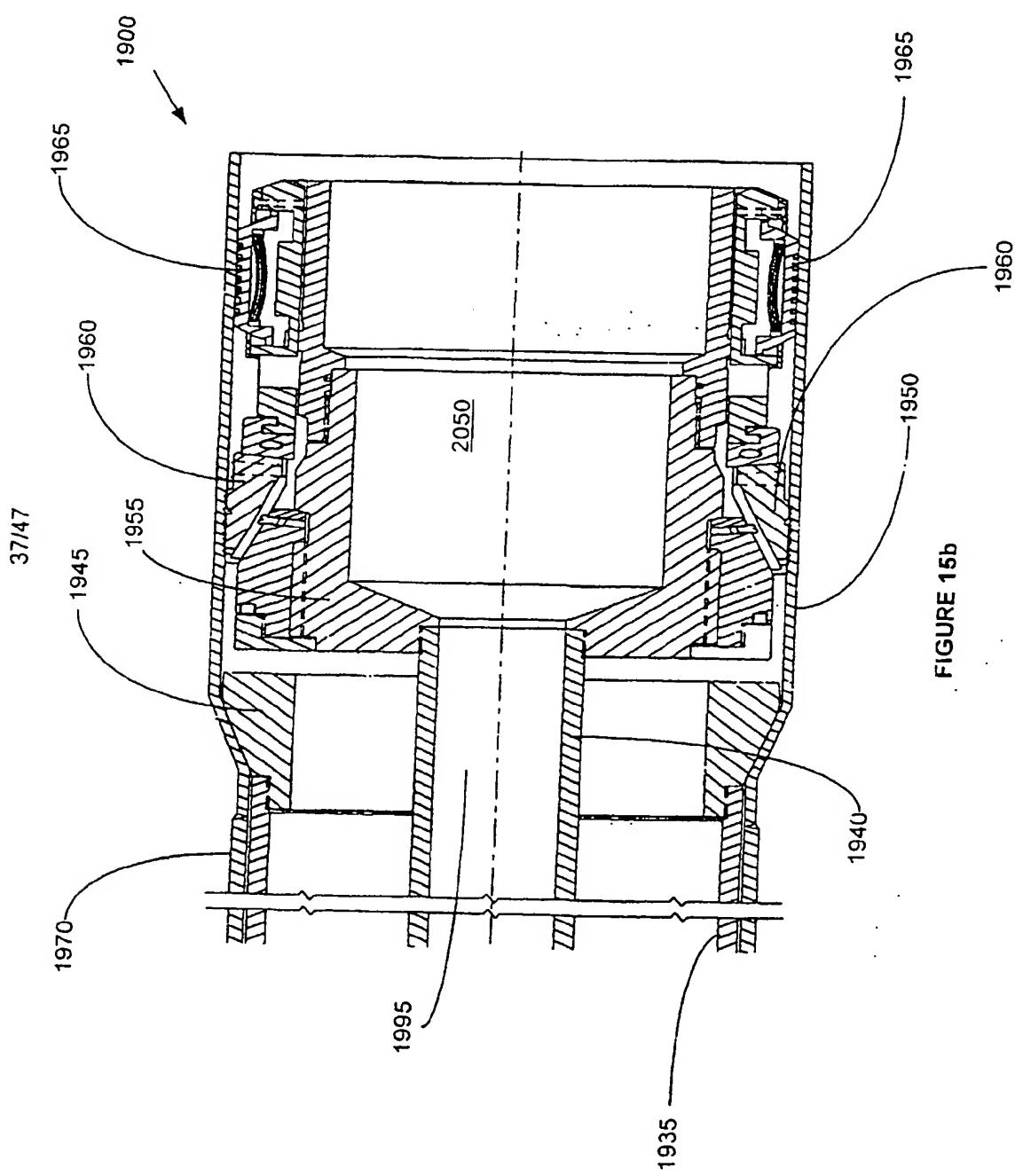


FIGURE 15b

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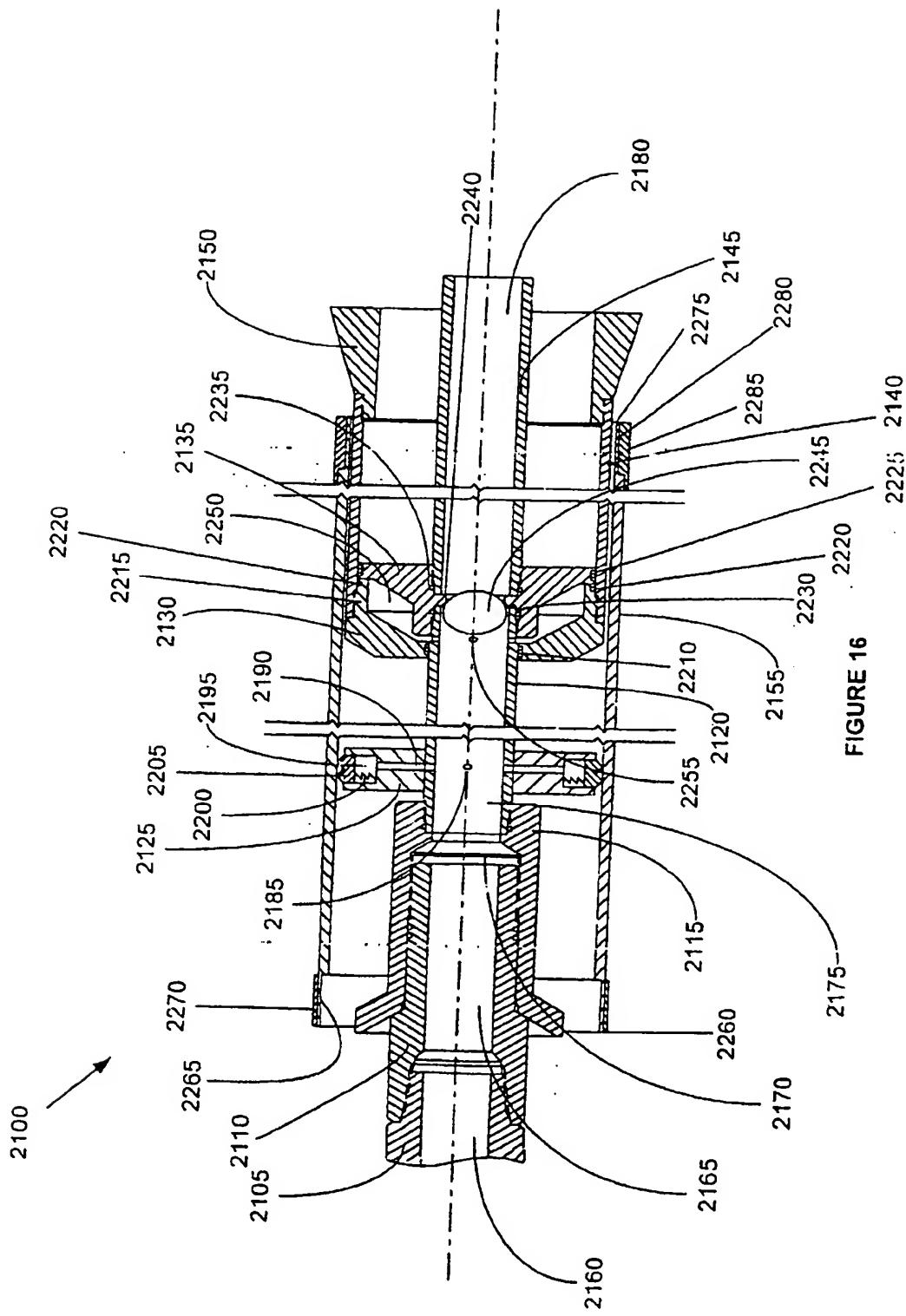


FIGURE 16

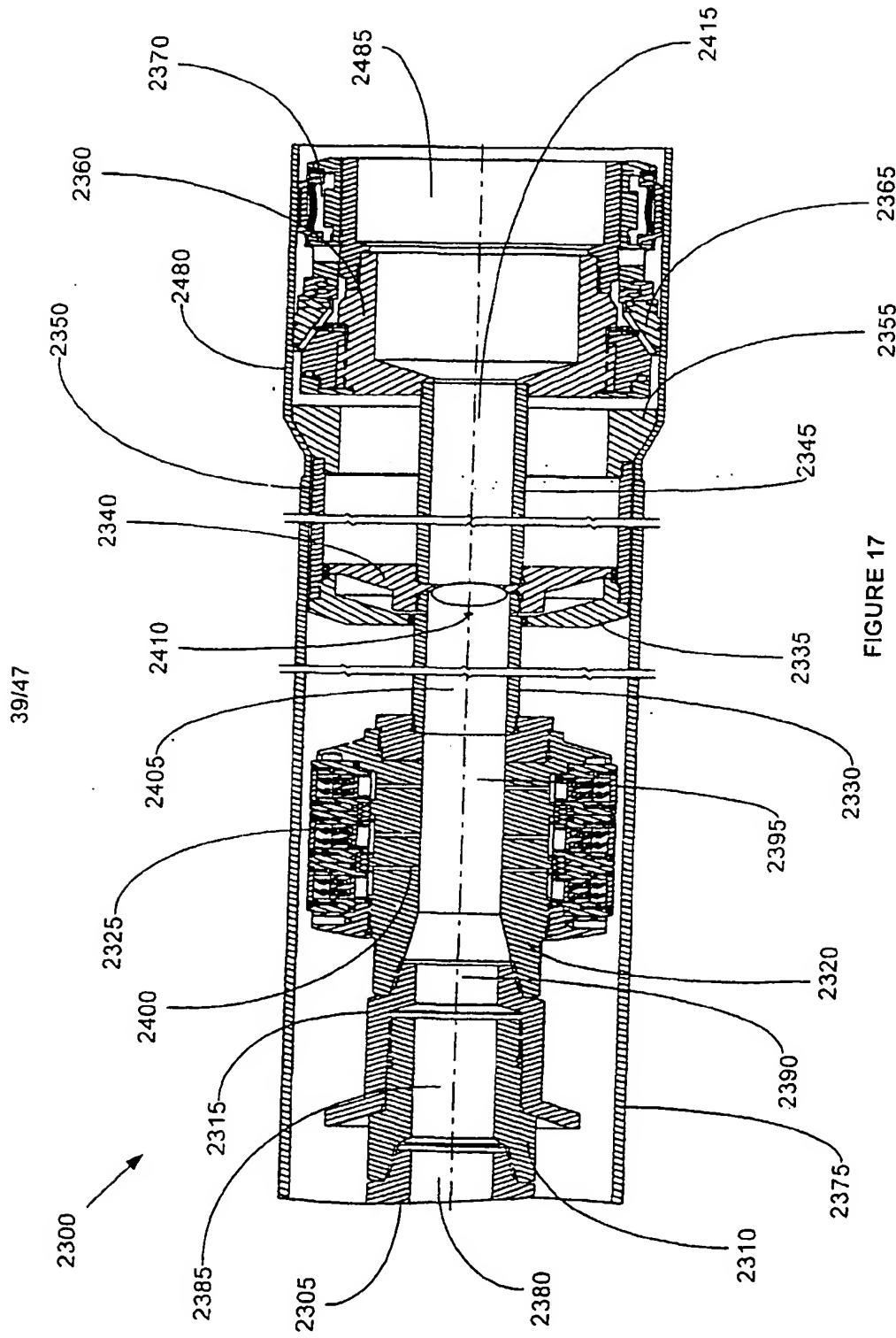


FIGURE 17

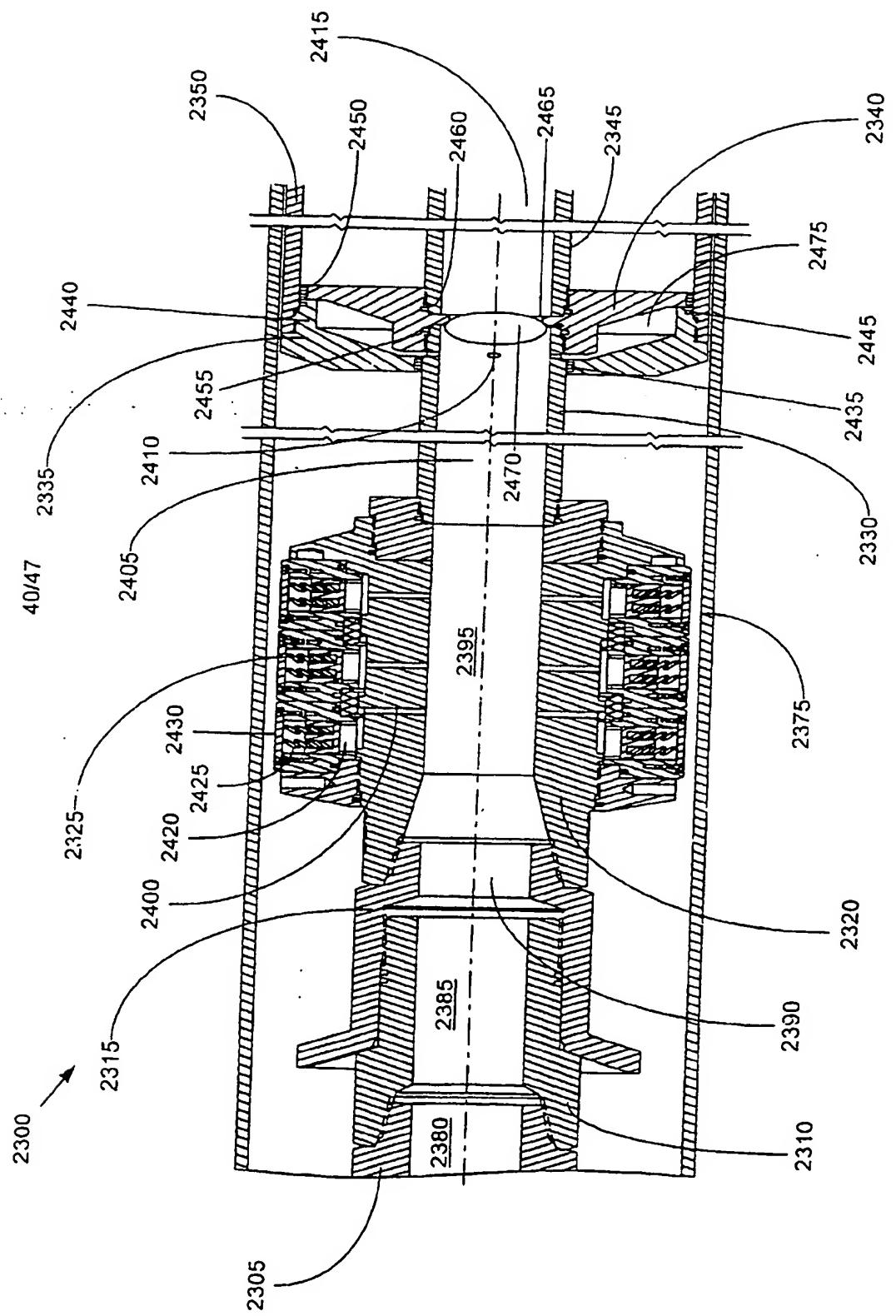


FIGURE 17a

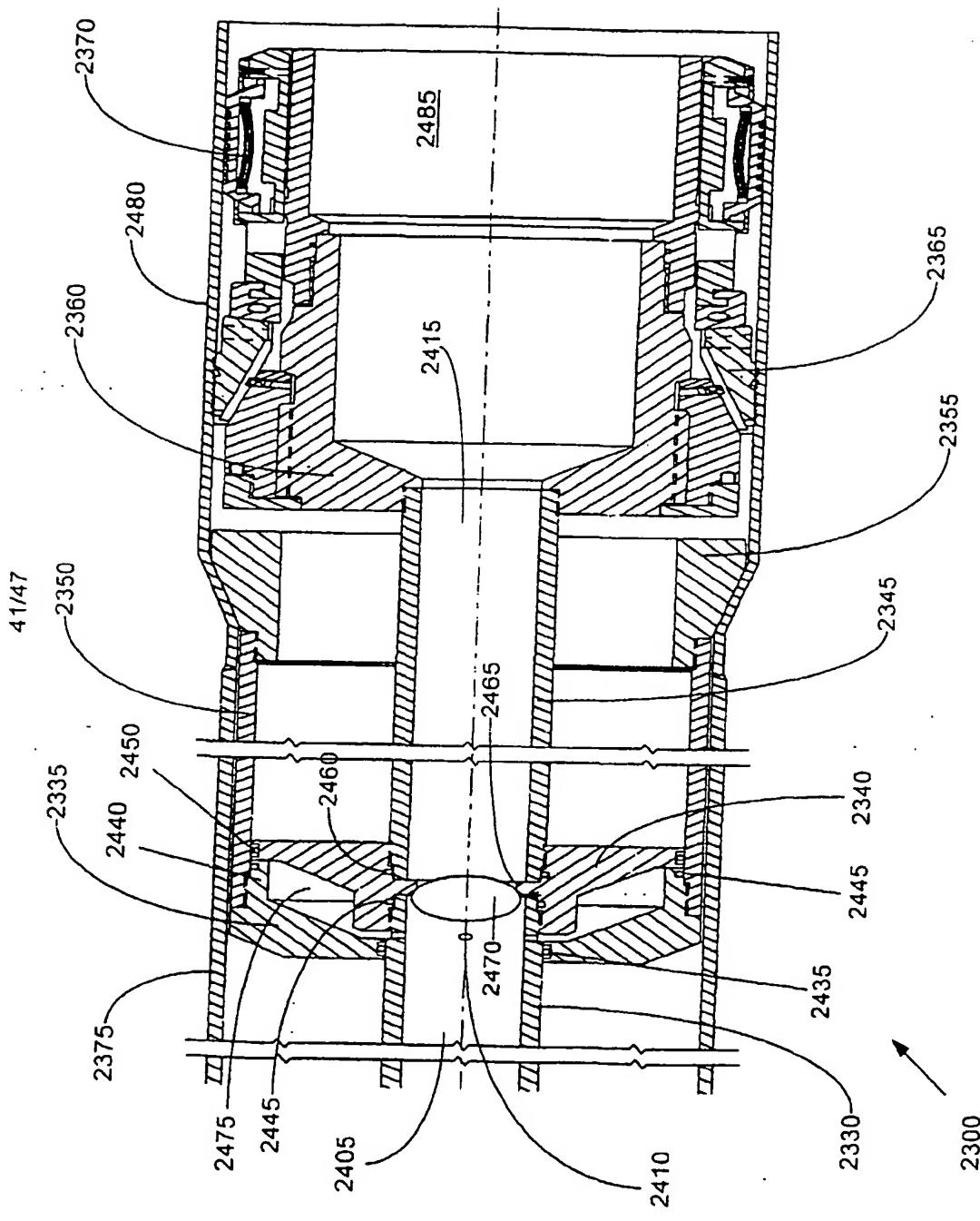


FIGURE 17b

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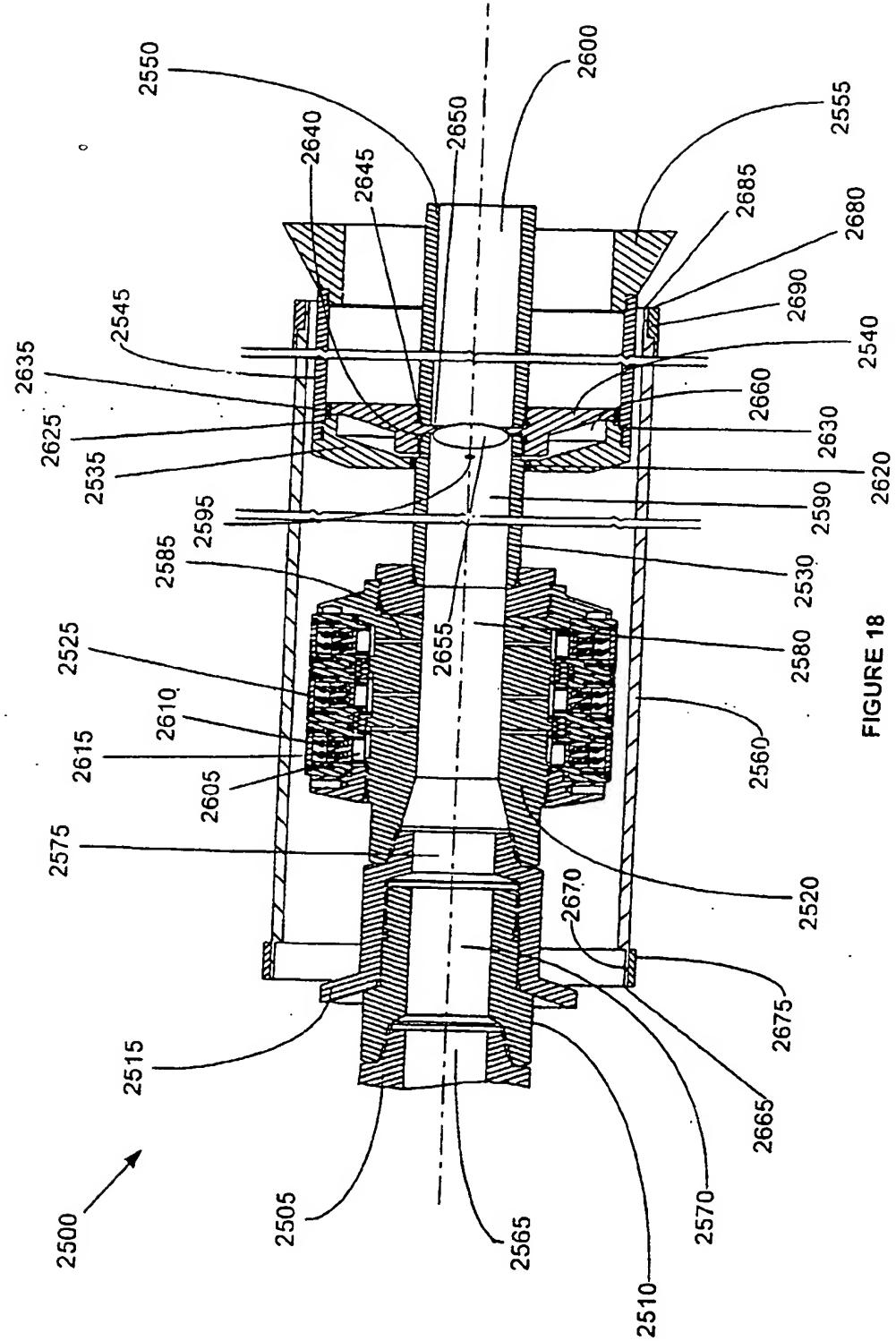


FIGURE 18

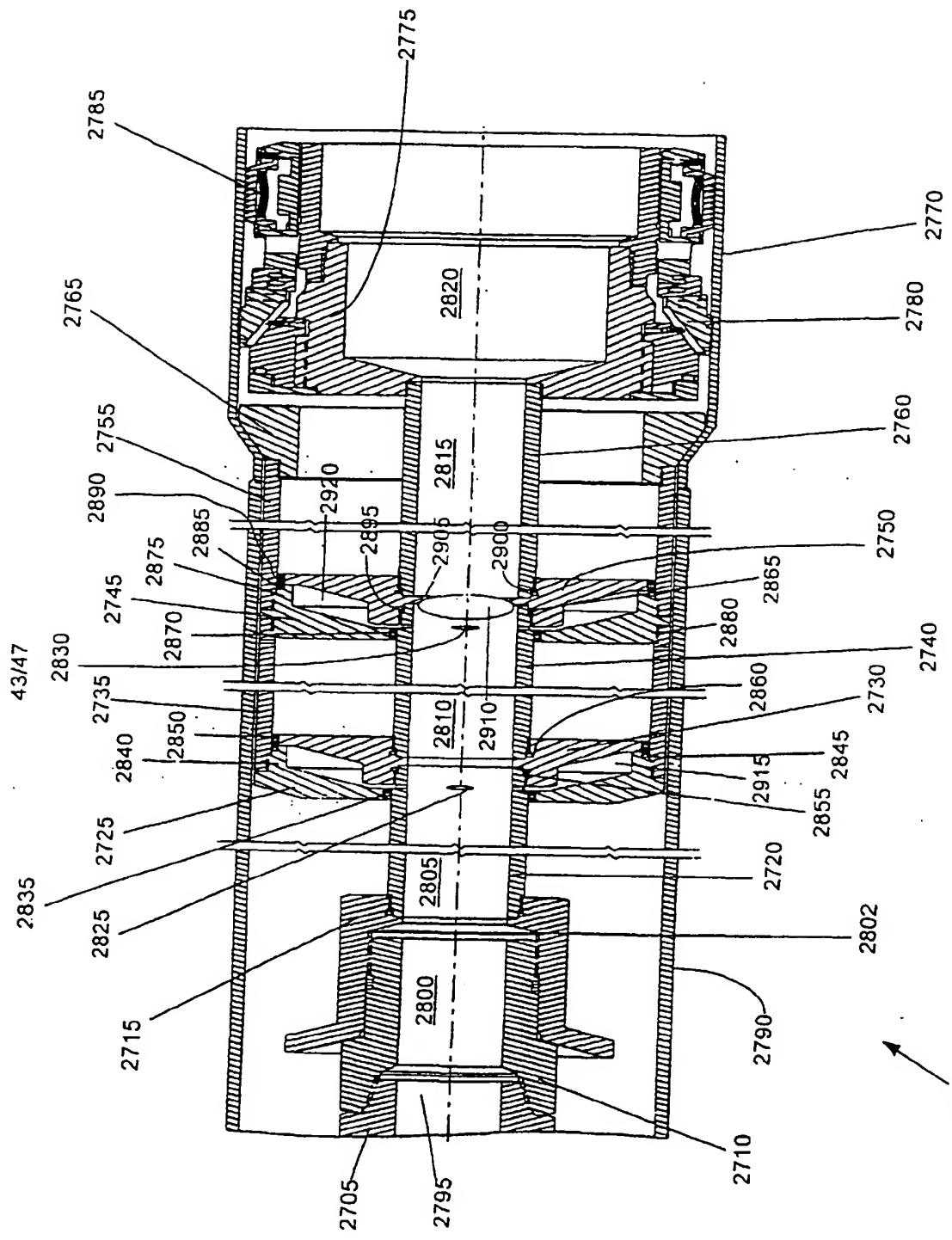


FIGURE 19

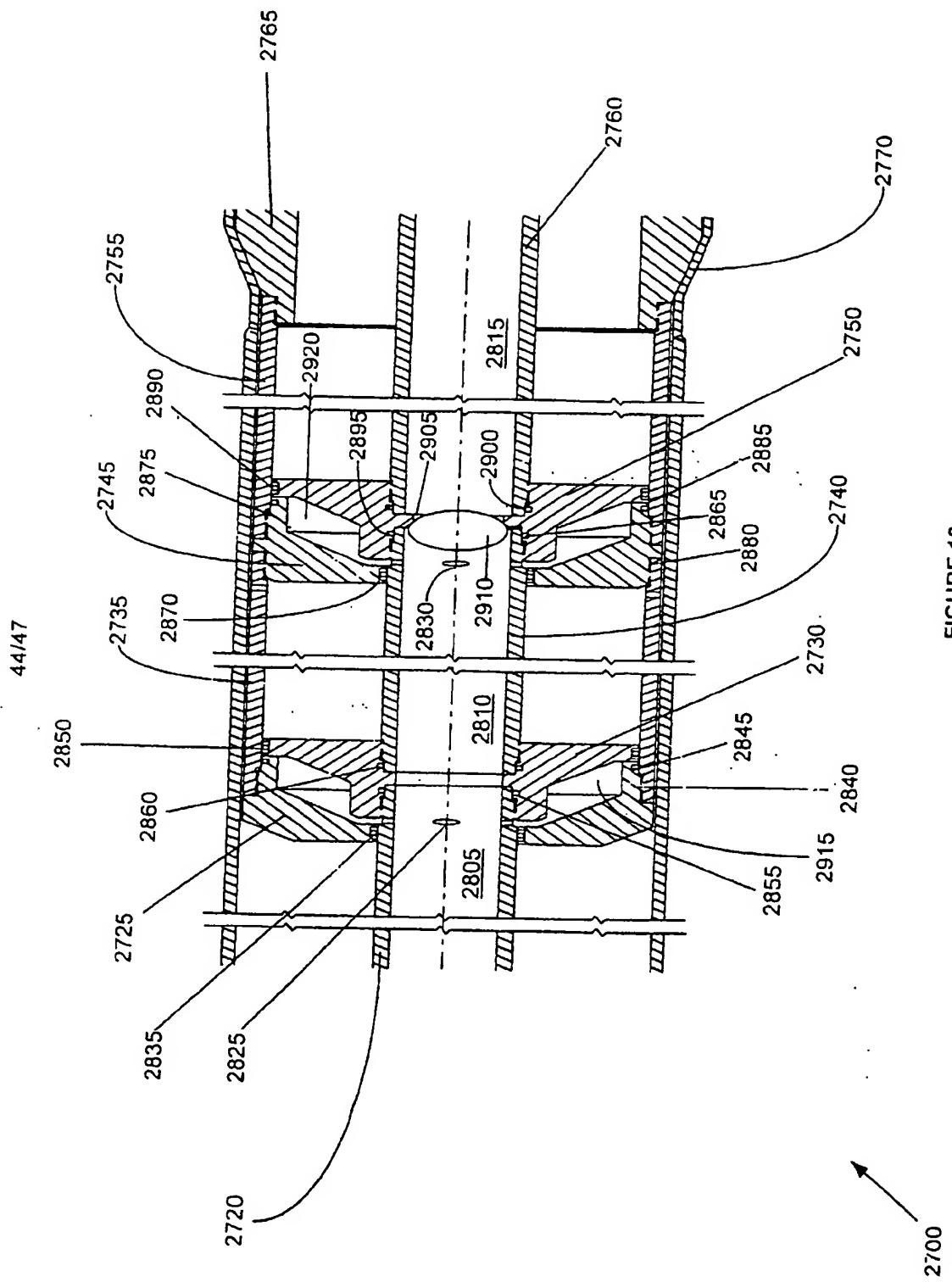


FIGURE 19a

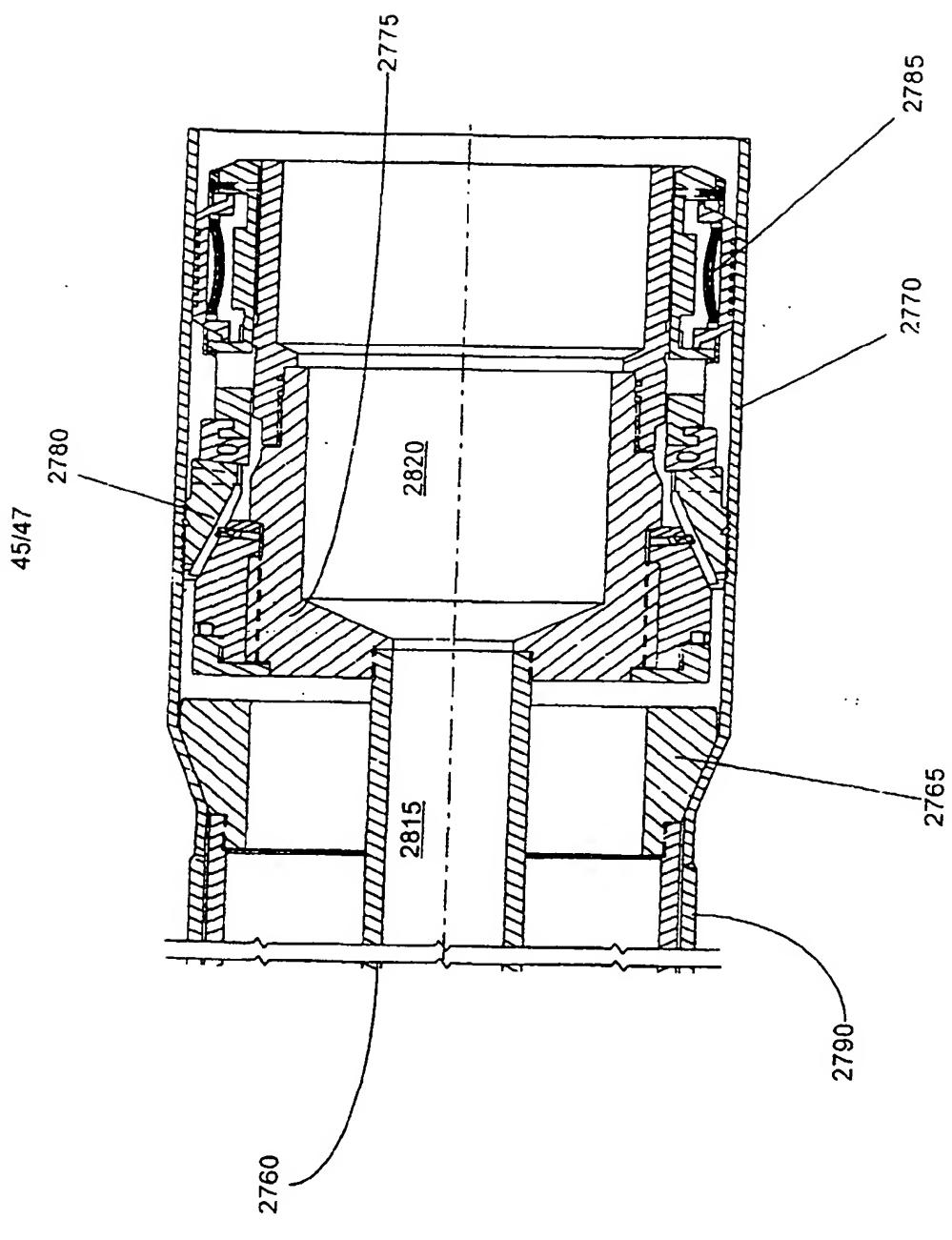


FIGURE 19b

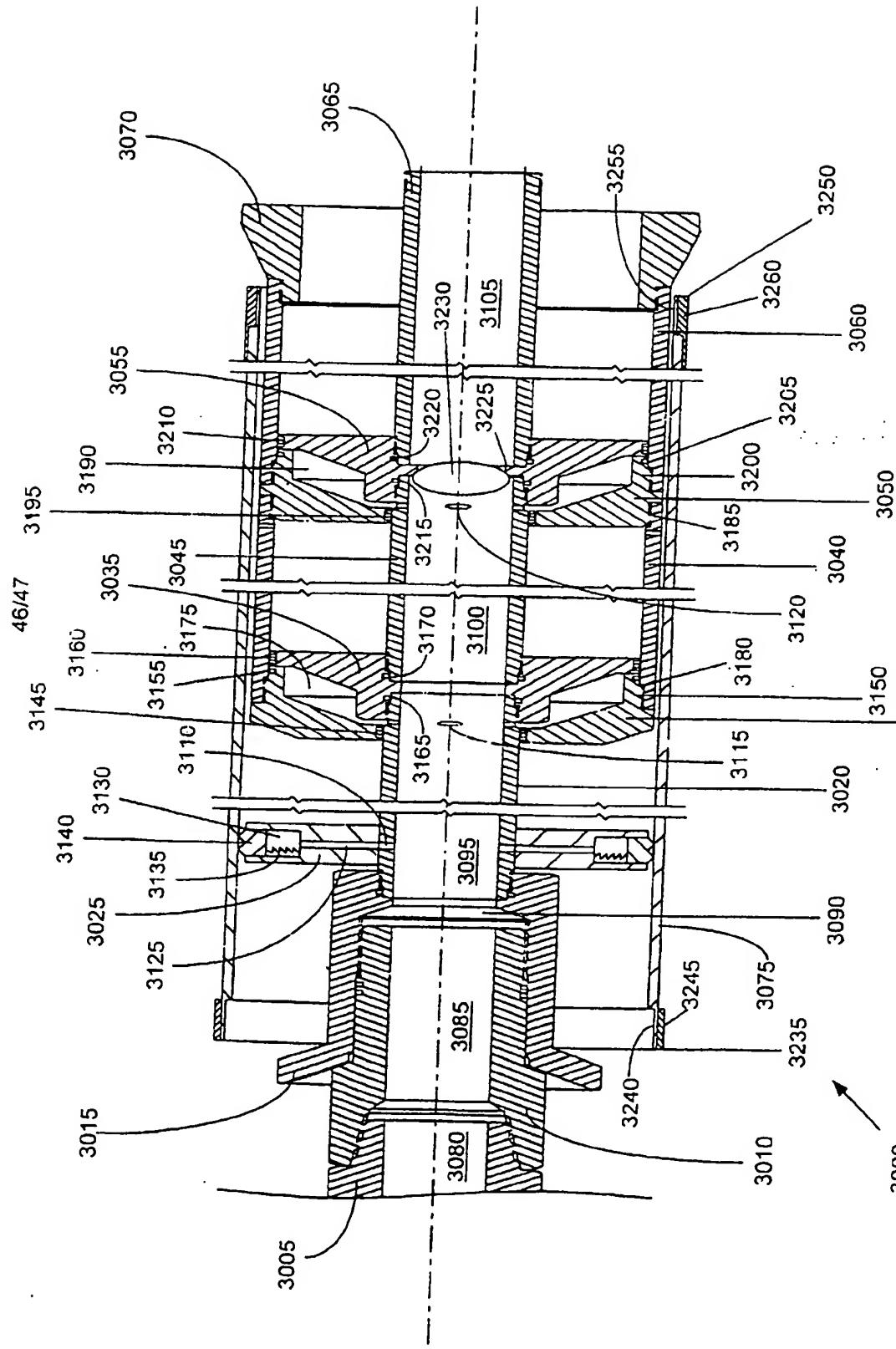


FIGURE 20

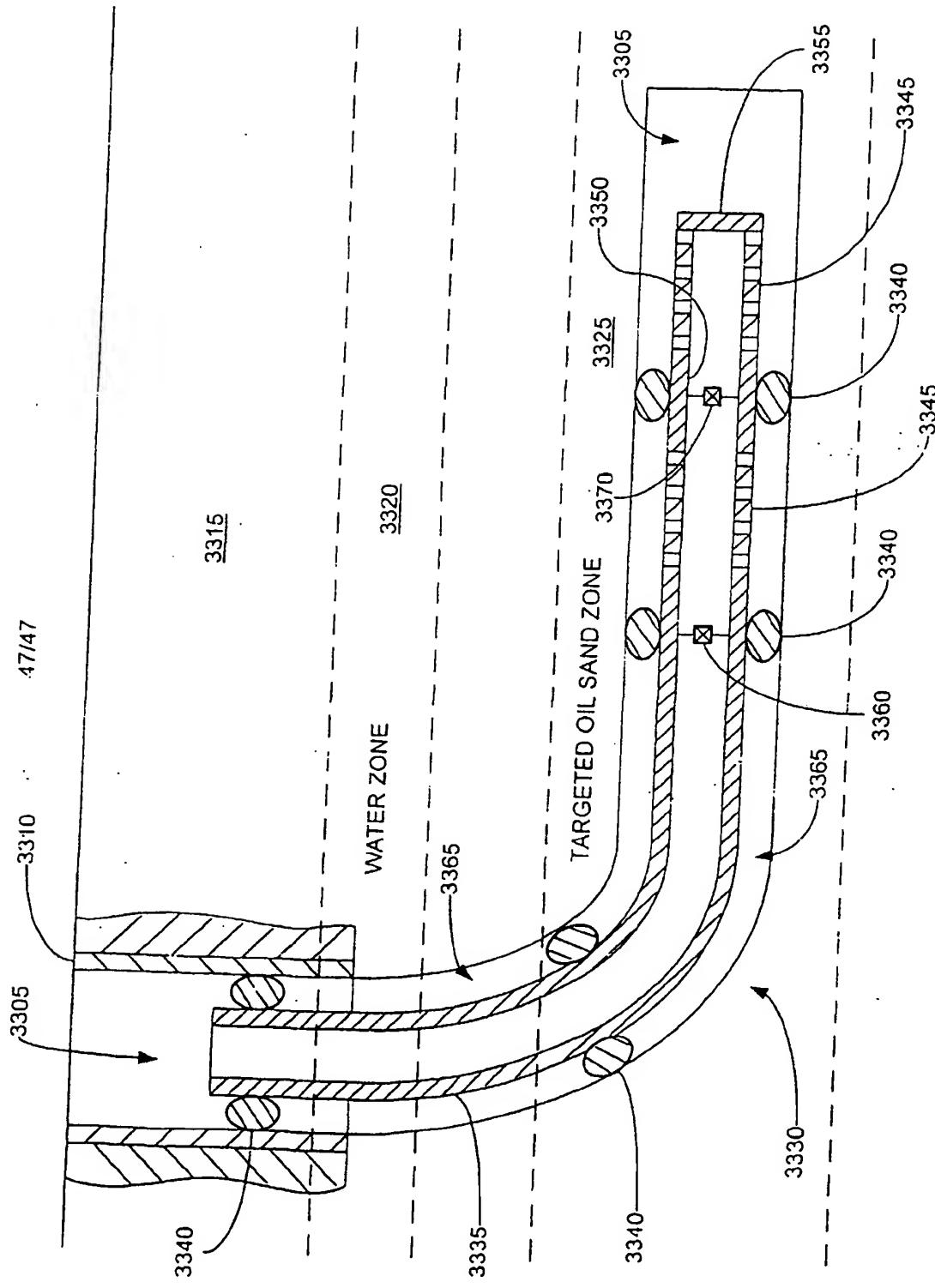


FIGURE 21

## A METHOD OF JOINING TUBULAR MEMBERS

## Background of the Invention

This invention relates to a method of joining tubular members.

5 Conventionally, when a wellbore is created, a number of casings are installed in the borehole to prevent collapse of the borehole wall and to prevent undesired outflow of drilling fluid into the formation or inflow of fluid from the formation into the borehole. The borehole is drilled in intervals whereby a casing which is to be installed in a lower borehole interval is lowered through a previously installed casing of an  
10 upper borehole interval. As a consequence of this procedure the casing of the lower interval is of smaller diameter than the casing of the upper interval. Thus, the casings are in a nested arrangement with casing diameters decreasing in downward direction. Cement annuli are provided between the outer surfaces of the casings and the borehole wall to seal the casings from the borehole wall. As a consequence of this nested  
15 arrangement a relatively large borehole diameter is required at the upper part of the wellbore. Such a large borehole diameter involves increased costs due to heavy casing handling equipment, large drill bits and increased volumes of drilling fluid and drill cuttings. Moreover, increased drilling rig time is involved due to required cement pumping, cement hardening, required equipment changes due to large variations in  
20 hole diameters drilled in the course of the well, and the large volume of cuttings drilled and removed.

Conventionally, at the surface end of the wellbore, a wellhead is formed that typically includes a surface casing, a number of production and/or drilling spools, valving, and a Christmas tree. Typically the wellhead further includes a concentric  
25 arrangement of casings including a production casing and one or more intermediate casings. The casings are typically supported using load bearing slips positioned above the ground. The conventional design and construction of wellheads is expensive and complex.

The present invention is directed to overcoming one or more of the limitations  
30 of the existing procedures for forming wellbores and wellheads.

## Summary of the Invention

- According to the present invention, there is provided a method comprising:
- providing a first tubular member;
- positioning a mandrel within an interior region of a second tubular member;
- 5 pressurizing a portion of the interior region of the mandrel;
- displacing the mandrel relative to the second tubular member; and
- extruding at least a thin - wall end portion of the second tubular member off of the mandrel into engagement with a thin - wall end portion of the first tubular member.
- Preferably, the pressurizing of the portion of the interior region of the mandrel
- 10 is provided at operating pressures ranging from 500 to 9,000 psi (34.47 to 620.53 bar).
- Preferably, the pressurizing of the portion of the interior region of the mandrel is provided at reduced operating pressures during a latter portion of the extruding.
- Preferably, the method further comprises supporting the extruded second tubular member using the interface with the first tubular member.
- 15 Preferably, the method further comprises lubricating the surface of the mandrel.
- Preferably, the method further comprises absorbing shock.
- Preferably, the method further comprises positioning the first and second tubular members in an overlapping relationship.
- Preferably, the method further comprises fluidically isolating an interior region of
- 20 the mandrel from an exterior region of the mandrel.
- Preferably, the interior region of the mandrel is fluidically isolated from the region exterior to the mandrel by injecting one or more plugs into the interior of the mandrel.
- Preferably, the pressurizing of the portion of the interior region of the mandrel
- 25 is provided by injecting a fluidic material at operating pressures and flow rates ranging from 500 to 9,000 psi and 40 to 3,000 gallons/minute (34.47 to 620.53 bar and 151.42 to 11356.24 litres/minute).
- Preferably, the method further comprises injecting fluidic material beyond the mandrel.
- 30 Preferably, one or more pressure chambers defined by the mandrel are pressurized.



Preferrably, the pressure chambers are pressurized to pressures ranging from 500 to 9,000 psi (34.47 to 620.53 bar).

Preferrably, the first tubular member comprises an existing section of a wellbore.

- 5        Preferably, the method further comprises sealing the interface between the first and second tubular members.

Preferrably, the method further comprises supporting the extruded second tubular member using the first tubular member.

- 10      Preferably, the method further comprises testing the integrity of the seal in the interface between the first tubular member and the second tubular member.

Preferrably, the method further comprises catching the mandrel upon the completion of the extruding.

Preferrably, the method further comprises drilling out the mandrel.

- 15      Preferably, the method further comprises supporting the mandrel with coiled tubing.

Preferrably, the method further comprises coupling the mandrel to a drillable shoe.

Preferrably, the method further comprises mandrel is displaced in the longitudinal direction.

- 20      Preferably, the mandrel is displaced in a first direction during the pressurization and in a second direction during a de-pressurization.

Preferrably, the first tubular member has an inner diameter greater than an outer diameter of the second tubular member prior to said extruding.

- 25      Preferably, the method further comprises sealing the interface between the first and second tubular members with a compressible annular body between the thin - wall end portion of the second tubular member and the thin - wall end portion of the first tubular member.

- 30      Preferably, the method further comprises sealing the interface between the first and second tubular members with a compressible annular body between the thin - wall end portion of the first tubular member and a borehole.

### Brief Description of the Drawings

- For a better understanding of the present invention, and to show how it may be carried into effect, reference will now be made, by way of example, to the accompanying drawings in which:
- FIG. 1 is a fragmentary cross-sectional view illustrating the drilling of a new section of a well borehole.
- FIG. 2 is a fragmentary cross-sectional view illustrating the placement of an apparatus for creating a casing within the new section of the well borehole.
- FIG. 3 is a fragmentary cross-sectional view illustrating the injection of a first quantity of a fluidic material into the new section of the well borehole.
- FIG. 3a is another fragmentary cross-sectional view illustrating the injection of a first quantity of a hardenable fluidic sealing material into the new section of the well borehole.
- FIG. 4 is a fragmentary cross-sectional view illustrating the injection of a second quantity of a fluidic material into the new section of the well borehole.
- FIG. 5 is a fragmentary cross-sectional view illustrating the drilling out of a portion of the cured hardenable fluidic sealing material from the new section of the well borehole.
- FIG. 6 is a cross-sectional view of the overlapping joint between adjacent tubular members.
- FIG. 7 is a fragmentary cross-sectional view of the apparatus for creating a casing within a well borehole.
- FIG. 8 is a fragmentary cross-sectional illustration of the placement of an expanded tubular member within another tubular member.
- FIG. 9 is a cross-sectional illustration of an apparatus for forming a casing including a drillable mandrel and shoe.
- FIG. 9a is another cross-sectional illustration of the apparatus of FIG. 9.
- FIG. 9b is another cross-sectional illustration of the apparatus of FIG. 9.
- FIG. 9c is another cross-sectional illustration of the apparatus of FIG. 9.
- FIG. 10a is a cross-sectional illustration of a wellbore including a pair of adjacent overlapping casings.

FIG. 10b is a cross-sectional illustration of an apparatus and method for creating a tie-back liner using an expandable tubular member.

FIG. 10c is a cross-sectional illustration of the pumping of a fluidic sealing material into the annular region between the tubular member and the existing casing.

5 FIG. 10d is a cross-sectional illustration of the pressurizing of the interior of the tubular member below the mandrel.

FIG. 10e is a cross-sectional illustration of the extrusion of the tubular member off of the mandrel.

10 FIG. 10f is a cross-sectional illustration of the tie-back liner before drilling out the shoe and packer.

FIG. 10g is a cross-sectional illustration of the completed tie-back liner created using an expandable tubular member.

FIG. 11a is a fragmentary cross-sectional view illustrating the drilling of a new section of a well borehole.

15 FIG. 11b is a fragmentary cross-sectional view illustrating the placement of an apparatus for hanging a tubular liner within the new section of the well borehole.

FIG. 11c is a fragmentary cross-sectional view illustrating the injection of a first quantity of a hardenable fluidic sealing material into the new section of the well borehole.

20 FIG. 11d is a fragmentary cross-sectional view illustrating the introduction of a wiper dart into the new section of the well borehole.

FIG. 11e is a fragmentary cross-sectional view illustrating the injection of a second quantity of a hardenable fluidic sealing material into the new section of the well borehole.

25 FIG. 11f is a fragmentary cross-sectional view illustrating the completion of the tubular liner.

FIG. 12 is a cross-sectional illustration of a wellhead system utilizing expandable tubular members.

30 FIG. 13 is a partial cross-sectional illustration of the wellhead system of FIG. 12.

FIG. 14a is an illustration of the formation of a mono-diameter wellbore casing.

FIG. 14b is another illustration of the formation of the mono-diameter wellbore casing.

FIG. 14c is another illustration of the formation of the mono-diameter wellbore casing.

5 FIG. 14d is another illustration of the formation of the mono-diameter wellbore casing.

FIG. 14e is another illustration of the formation of the mono-diameter wellbore casing.

10 FIG. 14f is another illustration of the formation of the mono-diameter wellbore casing.

FIG. 15 is an illustration of an apparatus for expanding a tubular member.

FIG. 15a is another illustration of the apparatus of FIG. 15.

FIG. 15b is another illustration of the apparatus of FIG. 15..

15 FIG. 16 is an illustration of an apparatus for forming a mono-diameter wellbore casing.

FIG. 17 is an illustration of an apparatus for expanding a tubular member.

FIG. 17a is another illustration of the apparatus of FIG. 16.

FIG. 17b is another illustration of the apparatus of FIG. 16.

20 FIG. 18 is an illustration of an apparatus for forming a mono-diameter wellbore casing.

FIG. 19 is an illustration of an apparatus for expanding a tubular member.

FIG. 19a is another illustration of the apparatus of FIG. 17.

FIG. 19b is another illustration of the apparatus of FIG. 17.

25 FIG. 20 is an illustration of an apparatus for forming a mono-diameter wellbore casing.

FIG. 21 is an illustration of the isolation of subterranean zones using expandable tubulars.

#### Detailed Description of the Illustrative Embodiments

Referring initially to Figs. 1-5, an apparatus and method for forming a wellbore 30 casing within a subterranean formation will now be described. As illustrated in Fig. 1, a wellbore 100 is positioned in a subterranean formation 105. The wellbore 100

includes an existing cased section 110 having a tubular casing 115 and an annular outer layer of cement 120.

In order to extend the wellbore 100 into the subterranean formation 105, a drill string 125 is used in a well known manner to drill out material from the subterranean 5 formation 105 to form a new section 130.

As illustrated in Fig. 2, an apparatus 200 for forming a wellbore casing in a subterranean formation is then positioned in the new section 130 of the wellbore 100. The apparatus 200 preferably includes an expandable mandrel or pig 205, a tubular member 210, a shoe 215, a lower cup seal 220, an upper cup seal 225, a fluid passage 10 230, a fluid passage 235, a fluid passage 240, seals 245, and a support member 250.

The expandable mandrel 205 is coupled to and supported by the support member 250. The expandable mandrel 205 is preferably adapted to controllably expand in a radial direction. The expandable mandrel 205 may comprise any number 15 of conventional commercially available expandable mandrels modified in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure. The expandable mandrel 205 comprises a hydraulic expansion tool as disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 5,348,095, the contents of which are incorporated herein by reference, modified in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure.

The tubular member 210 is supported by the expandable mandrel 205. The 20 tubular member 210 is expanded in the radial direction and extruded off of the expandable mandrel 205. The tubular member 210 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials such as, for example, Oilfield Country Tubular Goods (OCTG), 13 chromium steel tubing/casing, or plastic tubing/casing. The tubular member 210 is fabricated from OCTG in order to 25 maximize strength after expansion. The inner and outer diameters of the tubular member 210 may range, for example, from approximately 0.75 to 47 inches and 1.05 to 48 inches, respectively. The inner and outer diameters of the tubular member 210 range from about 3 to 15.5 inches and 3.5 to 16 inches, respectively in order to optimally provide minimal telescoping effect in the most commonly drilled wellbore 30 sizes. The tubular member 210 preferably comprises a solid member.

The end portion 260 of the tubular member 210 is slotted, perforated, or otherwise modified to catch or slow down the mandrel 205 when it completes the

extrusion of tubular member 210. The length of the tubular member 210 is limited to minimize the possibility of buckling. For typical tubular member 210 materials, the length of the tubular member 210 is preferably limited to between about 40 to 20,000 feet in length.

- 5        The shoe 215 is coupled to the expandable mandrel 205 and the tubular member 210. The shoe 215 includes fluid passage 240. The shoe 215 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available shoes such as, for example, Super Seal II float shoe, Super Seal II Down-Jet float shoe or a guide shoe with a sealing sleeve for a latch down plug modified in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure.
- 10      The shoe 215 comprises an aluminum down-jet guide shoe with a sealing sleeve for a latch-down plug available from Halliburton Energy Services in Dallas, TX, modified in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure, in order to optimally guide the tubular member 210 in the wellbore, optimally provide an adequate seal between the interior and exterior diameters of the overlapping joint
- 15      between the tubular members, and to optimally allow the complete drill out of the shoe and plug after the completion of the cementing and expansion operations.

The shoe 215 includes one or more through and side outlet ports in fluidic communication with the fluid passage 240. In this manner, the shoe 215 optimally injects hardenable fluidic sealing material into the region outside the shoe 215 and tubular member 210. The shoe 215 includes the fluid passage 240 having an inlet geometry that can receive a dart and/or a ball sealing member. In this manner, the fluid passage 240 can be optimally sealed off by introducing a plug, dart and/or ball sealing elements into the fluid passage 230.

- 20      The lower cup seal 220 is coupled to and supported by the support member 250.
- 25      The lower cup seal 220 prevents foreign materials from entering the interior region of the tubular member 210 adjacent to the expandable mandrel 205. The lower cup seal 220 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available cup seals such as, for example, TP cups, or Selective Injection Packer (SIP) cups modified in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure. The lower cup seal 220
- 30      comprises a SIP cup seal, available from Halliburton Energy Services in Dallas, TX in order to optimally block foreign material and contain a body of lubricant.

The upper cup seal 225 is coupled to and supported by the support member 250. The upper cup seal 225 prevents foreign materials from entering the interior region of the tubular member 210. The upper cup seal 225 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available cup seals such as, for example, TP cups or SIP

5      cups modified in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure. The upper cup seal 225 comprises a SIP cup, available from Halliburton Energy Services in Dallas, TX in order to optimally block the entry of foreign materials and contain a body of lubricant.

The fluid passage 230 permits fluidic materials to be transported to and from

10     the interior region of the tubular member 210 below the expandable mandrel 205. The fluid passage 230 is coupled to and positioned within the support member 250 and the expandable mandrel 205. The fluid passage 230 preferably extends from a position adjacent to the surface to the bottom of the expandable mandrel 205. The fluid passage 230 is preferably positioned along a centerline of the apparatus 200.

15     The fluid passage 230 is preferably selected, in the casing running mode of operation, to transport materials such as drilling mud or formation fluids at flow rates and pressures ranging from about 0 to 3,000 gallons/minute and 0 to 9,000 psi in order to minimize drag on the tubular member being run and to minimize surge pressures exerted on the wellbore which could cause a loss of wellbore fluids and lead to hole

20     collapse.

The fluid passage 235 permits fluidic materials to be released from the fluid passage 230. In this manner, during placement of the apparatus 200 within the new section 130 of the wellbore 100, fluidic materials 255 forced up the fluid passage 230 can be released into the wellbore 100 above the tubular member 210 thereby

25     minimizing surge pressures on the wellbore section 130. The fluid passage 235 is coupled to and positioned within the support member 250. The fluid passage is further fluidically coupled to the fluid passage 230.

The fluid passage 235 preferably includes a control valve for controllably opening and closing the fluid passage 235. The control valve is pressure activated in

30     order to controllably minimize surge pressures. The fluid passage 235 is preferably positioned substantially orthogonal to the centerline of the apparatus 200.

The fluid passage 235 is preferably selected to convey fluidic materials at flow rates and pressures ranging from about 0 to 3,000 gallons/minute and 0 to 9,000 psi in order to reduce the drag on the apparatus 200 during insertion into the new section 130 of the wellbore 100 and to minimize surge pressures on the new wellbore section 130.

- 5        The fluid passage 240 permits fluidic materials to be transported to and from the region exterior to the tubular member 210 and shoe 215. The fluid passage 240 is coupled to and positioned within the shoe 215 in fluidic communication with the interior region of the tubular member 210 below the expandable mandrel 205. The fluid passage 240 preferably has a cross-sectional shape that permits a plug, or other
- 10      similar device, to be placed in fluid passage 240 to thereby block further passage of fluidic materials. In this manner, the interior region of the tubular member 210 below the expandable mandrel 205 can be fluidically isolated from the region exterior to the tubular member 210. This permits the interior region of the tubular member 210 below the expandable mandrel 205 to be pressurized. The fluid passage 240 is preferably
- 15      positioned substantially along the centerline of the apparatus 200.

The fluid passage 240 is preferably selected to convey materials such as cement, drilling mud or epoxies at flow rates and pressures ranging from about 0 to 3,000 gallons/minute and 0 to 9,000 psi in order to optimally fill the annular region between the tubular member 210 and the new section 130 of the wellbore 100 with fluidic materials. The fluid passage 240 includes an inlet geometry that can receive a dart and/or a ball sealing member. In this manner, the fluid passage 240 can be sealed off by introducing a plug, dart and/or ball sealing elements into the fluid passage 230.

- 20      The seals 245 are coupled to and supported by an end portion 260 of the tubular member 210. The seals 245 are further positioned on an outer surface 265 of the end portion 260 of the tubular member 210. The seals 245 permit the overlapping joint between the end portion 270 of the casing 115 and the portion 260 of the tubular member 210 to be fluidically sealed. The seals 245 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available seals such as, for example, lead, rubber, Teflon, or epoxy seals modified in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure.
- 25      The seals 245 are molded from Stratalock epoxy available from Halliburton Energy Services in Dallas, TX in order to optimally provide a load bearing interference fit
- 30

between the end 260 of the tubular member 210 and the end 270 of the existing casing 115.

- The seals 245 are selected to optimally provide a sufficient frictional force to support the expanded tubular member 210 from the existing casing 115. The frictional force optimally provided by the seals 245 ranges from about 1,000 to 1,000,000 lbf in order to optimally support the expanded tubular member 210.
- 5

The support member 250 is coupled to the expandable mandrel 205, tubular member 210, shoe 215, and seals 220 and 225. The support member 250 preferably comprises an annular member having sufficient strength to carry the apparatus 200 into 10 the new section 130 of the wellbore 100. The support member 250 further includes one or more conventional centralizers (not illustrated) to help stabilize the apparatus 200.

- A quantity of lubricant 275 is provided in the annular region above the expandable mandrel 205 within the interior of the tubular member 210. In this 15 manner, the extrusion of the tubular member 210 off of the expandable mandrel 205 is facilitated. The lubricant 275 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available lubricants such as, for example, Lubriplate, chlorine based lubricants, oil based lubricants or Climax 1500 Antisieze (3100). The lubricant 275 comprises Climax 1500 Antisieze (3100) available from Climax Lubricants and 20 Equipment Co. in Houston, TX in order to optimally provide optimum lubrication to facilitate the expansion process.

The support member 250 is thoroughly cleaned prior to assembly to the remaining portions of the apparatus 200. In this manner, the introduction of foreign material into the apparatus 200 is minimized. This minimizes the possibility of foreign 25 material clogging the various flow passages and valves of the apparatus 200.

- Before or after positioning the apparatus 200 within the new section 130 of the wellbore 100, a couple of wellbore volumes are circulated in order to ensure that no foreign materials are located within the wellbore 100 that might clog up the various flow passages and valves of the apparatus 200 and to ensure that no foreign material 30 interferes with the expansion process.

As illustrated in Fig. 3, the fluid passage 235 is then closed and a hardenable fluidic sealing material 305 is then pumped from a surface location into the fluid

passage 230. The material 305 then passes from the fluid passage 230 into the interior region 310 of the tubular member 210 below the expandable mandrel 205. The material 305 then passes from the interior region 310 into the fluid passage 240. The material 305 then exits the apparatus 200 and fills the annular region 315 between the exterior of the tubular member 210 and the interior wall of the new section 130 of the wellbore 100. Continued pumping of the material 305 causes the material 305 to fill up at least a portion of the annular region 315.

The material 305 is preferably pumped into the annular region 315 at pressures and flow rates ranging, for example, from about 0 to 5000 psi and 0 to 1,500 gallons/min, respectively. The optimum flow rate and operating pressures vary as a function of the casing and wellbore sizes, wellbore section length, available pumping equipment, and fluid properties of the fluidic material being pumped. The optimum flow rate and operating pressure are preferably determined using conventional empirical methods.

The hardenable fluidic sealing material 305 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available hardenable fluidic sealing materials such as, for example, slag mix, cement or epoxy. The hardenable fluidic sealing material 305 comprises a blended cement prepared specifically for the particular well section being drilled from Halliburton Energy Services in Dallas, TX in order to provide optimal support for tubular member 210 while also maintaining optimum flow characteristics so as to minimize difficulties during the displacement of cement in the annular region 315. The optimum blend of the blended cement is preferably determined using conventional empirical methods.

The annular region 315 preferably is filled with the material 305 in sufficient quantities to ensure that, upon radial expansion of the tubular member 210, the annular region 315 of the new section 130 of the wellbore 100 will be filled with material 305.

As illustrated in Fig. 3a, the wall thickness and/or the outer diameter of the tubular member 210 is reduced in the region adjacent to the mandrel 205 in order optimally permit placement of the apparatus 200 in positions in the wellbore with tight clearances. Furthermore, in this manner, the initiation of the radial expansion of the tubular member 210 during the extrusion process is optimally facilitated.

As illustrated in Fig. 4, once the annular region 315 has been adequately filled with material 305, a plug 405, or other similar device, is introduced into the fluid passage 240 thereby fluidically isolating the interior region 310 from the annular region 315. A non-hardenable fluidic material 306 is then pumped into the interior region 310 causing the interior region to pressurize. In this manner, the interior of the expanded tubular member 210 will not contain significant amounts of cured material 305. This reduces and simplifies the cost of the entire process. Alternatively, the material 305 may be used during this phase of the process.

Once the interior region 310 becomes sufficiently pressurized, the tubular member 210 is extruded off of the expandable mandrel 205. During the extrusion process, the expandable mandrel 205 may be raised out of the expanded portion of the tubular member 210. During the extrusion process, the mandrel 205 is raised at approximately the same rate as the tubular member 210 is expanded in order to keep the tubular member 210 stationary relative to the new wellbore section 130. The extrusion process is commenced with the tubular member 210 positioned above the bottom of the new wellbore section 130, keeping the mandrel 205 stationary, and allowing the tubular member 210 to extrude off of the mandrel 205 and fall down the new wellbore section 130 under the force of gravity.

The plug 405 is preferably placed into the fluid passage 240 by introducing the plug 405 into the fluid passage 230 at a surface location in a conventional manner. The plug 405 preferably acts to fluidically isolate the hardenable fluidic sealing material 305 from the non hardenable fluidic material 306.

The plug 405 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available devices from plugging a fluid passage such as, for example, Multiple Stage Cementer (MSC) latch-down plug, Omega latch-down plug or three-wiper latch-down plug modified in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure. The plug 405 comprises a MSC latch-down plug available from Halliburton Energy Services in Dallas, TX.

After placement of the plug 405 in the fluid passage 240, a non hardenable fluidic material 306 is preferably pumped into the interior region 310 at pressures and flow rates ranging, for example, from approximately 400 to 10,000 psi and 30 to 4,000 gallons/min. In this manner, the amount of hardenable fluidic sealing material within

the interior 310 of the tubular member 210 is minimized. After placement of the plug 405 in the fluid passage 240, the non hardenable material 306 is preferably pumped into the interior region 310 at pressures and flow rates ranging from approximately 500 to 9,000 psi and 40 to 3,000 gallons/min in order to maximize the extrusion speed.

- 5       The apparatus 200 is adapted to minimize tensile, burst, and friction effects upon the tubular member 210 during the expansion process. These effects will depend upon the geometry of the expansion mandrel 205, the material composition of the tubular member 210 and expansion mandrel 205, the inner diameter of the tubular member 210, the wall thickness of the tubular member 210, the type of lubricant, and
- 10      the yield strength of the tubular member 210. In general, the thicker the wall thickness, the smaller the inner diameter, and the greater the yield strength of the tubular member 210, then the greater the operating pressures required to extrude the tubular member 210 off of the mandrel 205.

- 15      For typical tubular members 210, the extrusion of the tubular member 210 off of the expandable mandrel will begin when the pressure of the interior region 310 reaches, for example, approximately 500 to 9,000 psi.

- 20      During the extrusion process, the expandable mandrel 205 may be raised out of the expanded portion of the tubular member 210 at rates ranging, for example, from about 0 to 5 ft/sec. During the extrusion process, the expandable mandrel 205 is raised out of the expanded portion of the tubular member 210 at rates ranging from about 0 to 2 ft/sec in order to minimize the time required for the expansion process while also permitting easy control of the expansion process.

- 25      When the end portion 260 of the tubular member 210 is extruded off of the expandable mandrel 205, the outer surface 265 of the end portion 260 of the tubular member 210 will preferably contact the interior surface 410 of the end portion 270 of the casing 115 to form an fluid tight overlapping joint. The contact pressure of the overlapping joint may range, for example, from approximately 50 to 20,000 psi. The contact pressure of the overlapping joint ranges from approximately 400 to 10,000 psi in order to provide optimum pressure to activate the annular sealing members 245 and optimally provide resistance to axial motion to accommodate typical tensile and compressive loads.

The overlapping joint between the section 410 of the existing casing 115 and the section 265 of the expanded tubular member 210 preferably provides a gaseous and fluidic seal. The scaling members 245 optimally provide a fluidic and gaseous seal in the overlapping joint.

- 5        The operating pressure and flow rate of the non hardenable fluidic material 306 is controllably ramped down when the expandable mandrel 205 reaches the end portion 260 of the tubular member 210. In this manner, the sudden release of pressure caused by the complete extrusion of the tubular member 210 off of the expandable mandrel 205 can be minimized. The operating pressure is reduced in a substantially linear fashion from 100% to about 10% during the end of the extrusion process beginning when the mandrel 205 is within about 5 feet from completion of the extrusion process.
- 10

Alternatively, or in combination, a shock absorber is provided in the support member 250 in order to absorb the shock caused by the sudden release of pressure.

- 15      The shock absorber may comprise, for example, any conventional commercially available shock absorber adapted for use in wellbore operations.

Alternatively, or in combination, a mandrel catching structure is provided in the end portion 260 of the tubular member 210 in order to catch or at least decelerate the mandrel 205.

- 20      Once the extrusion process is completed, the expandable mandrel 205 is removed from the wellbore 100. Either before or after the removal of the expandable mandrel 205, the integrity of the fluidic seal of the overlapping joint between the upper portion 260 of the tubular member 210 and the lower portion 270 of the casing 115 is tested using conventional methods.

- 25      If the fluidic seal of the overlapping joint between the upper portion 260 of the tubular member 210 and the lower portion 270 of the casing 115 is satisfactory, then any uncured portion of the material 305 within the expanded tubular member 210 is then removed in a conventional manner such as, for example, circulating the uncured material out of the interior of the expanded tubular member 210. The mandrel 205 is then pulled out of the wellbore section 130 and a drill bit or mill is used in combination with a conventional drilling assembly 505 to drill out any hardened material 305 within
- 30

the tubular member 210. The material 305 within the annular region 315 is then allowed to cure.

As illustrated in Fig. 5, preferably any remaining cured material 305 within the interior of the expanded tubular member 210 is then removed in a conventional manner  
5 using a conventional drill string 505. The resulting new section of casing 510 includes the expanded tubular member 210 and an outer annular layer 515 of cured material 305. The bottom portion of the apparatus 200 comprising the shoe 215 and dart 405 may then be removed by drilling out the shoe 215 and dart 405 using conventional drilling methods.

10 As illustrated in Fig. 6, the upper portion 260 of the tubular member 210 includes one or more sealing members 605 and one or more pressure relief holes 610. In this manner, the overlapping joint between the lower portion 270 of the casing 115 and the upper portion 260 of the tubular member 210 is pressure-tight and the pressure on the interior and exterior surfaces of the tubular member 210 is equalized during the  
15 extrusion process.

The sealing members 605 are seated within recesses 615 formed in the outer surface 265 of the upper portion 260 of the tubular member 210. The sealing members 605 are bonded or molded onto the outer surface 265 of the upper portion 260 of the tubular member 210. The pressure relief holes 610 are preferably positioned in the last  
20 few feet of the tubular member 210. The pressure relief holes reduce the operating pressures required to expand the upper portion 260 of the tubular member 210. This reduction in required operating pressure in turn reduces the velocity of the mandrel 205 upon the completion of the extrusion process. This reduction in velocity in turn minimizes the mechanical shock to the entire apparatus 200 upon the completion of the  
25 extrusion process.

Referring now to Fig. 7, an apparatus 700 for forming a casing within a wellbore preferably includes an expandable mandrel or pig 705, an expandable mandrel or pig container 710, a tubular member 715, a float shoe 720, a lower cup seal 725, an upper cup seal 730, a fluid passage 735, a fluid passage 740, a support member  
30 745, a body of lubricant 750, an overshot connection 755, another support member 760, and a stabilizer 765.

The expandable mandrel 705 is coupled to and supported by the support member 745. The expandable mandrel 705 is further coupled to the expandable mandrel container 710. The expandable mandrel 705 is preferably adapted to controllably expand in a radial direction. The expandable mandrel 705 may comprise

5 any number of conventional commercially available expandable mandrels modified in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure. The expandable mandrel 705 comprises a hydraulic expansion tool substantially as disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 5,348,095, the contents of which are incorporated herein by reference, modified in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure.

10 The expandable mandrel container 710 is coupled to and supported by the support member 745. The expandable mandrel container 710 is further coupled to the expandable mandrel 705. The expandable mandrel container 710 may be constructed from any number of conventional commercially available materials such as, for example, Oilfield Country Tubular Goods, stainless steel, titanium or high strength steels. The expandable mandrel container 710 is fabricated from material having a greater strength than the material from which the tubular member 715 is fabricated. In this manner, the container 710 can be fabricated from a tubular material having a thinner wall thickness than the tubular member 210. This permits the container 710 to pass through tight clearances thereby facilitating its placement within the wellbore.

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20 Once the expansion process begins, and the thicker, lower strength material of the tubular member 715 is expanded, the outside diameter of the tubular member 715 is greater than the outside diameter of the container 710.

25 The tubular member 715 is coupled to and supported by the expandable mandrel 705. The tubular member 715 is preferably expanded in the radial direction and extruded off of the expandable mandrel 705 substantially as described above with reference to Figs. 1-6. The tubular member 715 may be fabricated from any number of materials such as, for example, Oilfield Country Tubular Goods (OCTG), automotive grade steel or plastics. The tubular member 715 is fabricated from OCTG.

30 The tubular member 715 has a substantially annular cross-section. The tubular member 715 has a substantially circular annular cross-section.

The tubular member 715 preferably includes an upper section 805, an intermediate section 810, and a lower section 815. The upper section 805 of the

tubular member 715 preferably is defined by the region beginning in the vicinity of the mandrel container 710 and ending with the top section 820 of the tubular member 715.

The intermediate section 810 of the tubular member 715 is preferably defined by the region beginning in the vicinity of the top of the mandrel container 710 and ending

- 5 with the region in the vicinity of the mandrel 705. The lower section 815 of the tubular member 715 is preferably defined by the region beginning in the vicinity of the mandrel 705 and ending at the bottom 825 of the tubular member 715.

The wall thickness of the upper section 805 of the tubular member 715 is greater than the wall thicknesses of the intermediate and lower sections 810 and 815 of

- 10 the tubular member 715 in order to optimally facilitate the initiation of the extrusion process and optimally permit the apparatus 700 to be positioned in locations in the wellbore having tight clearances.

The outer diameter and wall thickness of the upper section 805 of the tubular member 715 may range, for example, from about 1.05 to 48 inches and 1/8 to 2 inches,

- 15 respectively. The outer diameter and wall thickness of the upper section 805 of the tubular member 715 range from about 3.5 to 16 inches and 3/8 to 1.5 inches, respectively.

The outer diameter and wall thickness of the intermediate section 810 of the tubular member 715 may range, for example, from about 2.5 to 50 inches and 1/16 to

- 20 1.5 inches, respectively. The outer diameter and wall thickness of the intermediate section 810 of the tubular member 715 range from about 3.5 to 19 inches and 1/8 to 1.25 inches, respectively.

The outer diameter and wall thickness of the lower section 815 of the tubular member 715 may range, for example, from about 2.5 to 50 inches and 1/16 to 1.25

- 25 inches, respectively. The outer diameter and wall thickness of the lower section 810 of the tubular member 715 range from about 3.5 to 19 inches and 1/8 to 1.25 inches, respectively. The wall thickness of the lower section 815 of the tubular member 715 is further increased to increase the strength of the shoc 720 when drillable materials such as, for example, aluminum are used.

- 30 The tubular member 715 preferably comprises a solid tubular member. The end portion 820 of the tubular member 715 is slotted, perforated, or otherwise modified to catch or slow down the mandrel 705 when it completes the extrusion of tubular

member 715. The length of the tubular member 715 is limited to minimize the possibility of buckling. For typical tubular member 715 materials, the length of the tubular member 715 is preferably limited to between about 40 to 20,000 feet in length.

- The shoe 720 is coupled to the expandable mandrel 705 and the tubular member
- 5 715. The shoe 720 includes the fluid passage 740. The shoe 720 further includes an inlet passage 830, and one or more jet ports 835. The cross-sectional shape of the inlet passage 830 is adapted to receive a latch-down dart, or other similar elements, for blocking the inlet passage 830. The interior of the shoe 720 preferably includes a body of solid material 840 for increasing the strength of the shoe 720. The body of solid
- 10 material 840 comprises aluminum.

The shoe 720 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available shoes such as, for example, Super Seal II Down-Jet float shoe, or guide shoe with a sealing sleeve for a latch down plug modified in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure. The shoe 720 comprises an aluminum down-jet guide shoe

15 with a sealing sleeve for a latch-down plug available from Halliburton Energy Services in Dallas, TX, modified in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure, in order to optimize guiding the tubular member 715 in the wellbore, optimize the seal between the tubular member 715 and an existing wellbore casing, and to optimally facilitate the removal of the shoe 720 by drilling it out after completion of the

20 extrusion process.

The lower cup seal 725 is coupled to and supported by the support member 745. The lower cup seal 725 prevents foreign materials from entering the interior region of the tubular member 715 above the expandable mandrel 705. The lower cup seal 725 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available cup seals such as,

25 for example, TP cups or Selective Injection Packer (SIP) cups modified in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure. The lower cup seal 725 comprises a SIP cup, available from Halliburton Energy Services in Dallas, TX in order to optimally provide a debris barrier and hold a body of lubricant.

The upper cup seal 730 is coupled to and supported by the support member 760.

30 The upper cup seal 730 prevents foreign materials from entering the interior region of the tubular member 715. The upper cup seal 730 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available cup seals such as, for example, TP cups or

Selective Injection Packer (SIP) cup modified in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure. The upper cup seal 730 comprises a SIP cup available from Halliburton Energy Services in Dallas, TX in order to optimally provide a debris barrier and contain a body of lubricant.

- 5        The fluid passage 735 permits fluidic materials to be transported to and from the interior region of the tubular member 715 below the expandable mandrel 705. The fluid passage 735 is fluidically coupled to the fluid passage 740. The fluid passage 735 is preferably coupled to and positioned within the support member 760, the support member 745, the mandrel container 710, and the expandable mandrel 705. The fluid
- 10      passage 735 preferably extends from a position adjacent to the surface to the bottom of the expandable mandrel 705. The fluid passage 735 is preferably positioned along a centerline of the apparatus 700. The fluid passage 735 is preferably selected to transport materials such as cement, drilling mud or epoxies at flow rates and pressures ranging from about 40 to 3,000 gallons/minute and 500 to 9,000 psi in order to
- 15      optimally provide sufficient operating pressures to extrude the tubular member 715 off of the expandable mandrel 705.

- As described above with reference to Figs. 1-6, during placement of the apparatus 700 within a new section of a wellbore, fluidic materials forced up the fluid passage 735 can be released into the wellbore above the tubular member 715. The
- 20      apparatus 700 further includes a pressure release passage that is coupled to and positioned within the support member 260. The pressure release passage is further fluidically coupled to the fluid passage 735. The pressure release passage preferably includes a control valve for controllably opening and closing the fluid passage. The control valve is pressure activated in order to controllably minimize surge pressures.
  - 25      The pressure release passage is preferably positioned substantially orthogonal to the centerline of the apparatus 700. The pressure release passage is preferably selected to convey materials such as cement, drilling mud or epoxies at flow rates and pressures ranging from about 0 to 500 gallons/minute and 0 to 1,000 psi in order to reduce the drag on the apparatus 700 during insertion into a new section of a wellbore and to
  - 30      minimize surge pressures on the new wellbore section.

The fluid passage 740 permits fluidic materials to be transported to and from the region exterior to the tubular member 715. The fluid passage 740 is preferably

coupled to and positioned within the shoe 720 in fluidic communication with the interior region of the tubular member 715 below the expandable mandrel 705. The fluid passage 740 preferably has a cross-sectional shape that permits a plug, or other similar device, to be placed in the inlet 830 of the fluid passage 740 to thereby block further passage of fluidic materials. In this manner, the interior region of the tubular member 715 below the expandable mandrel 705 can be optimally fluidically isolated from the region exterior to the tubular member 715. This permits the interior region of the tubular member 715 below the expandable mandrel 205 to be pressurized.

The fluid passage 740 is preferably positioned substantially along the centerline of the apparatus 700. The fluid passage 740 is preferably selected to convey materials such as cement, drilling mud or epoxies at flow rates and pressures ranging from about 0 to 3,000 gallons/minute and 0 to 9,000 psi in order to optimally fill an annular region between the tubular member 715 and a new section of a wellbore with fluidic materials. The fluid passage 740 includes an inlet passage 830 having a geometry that can receive a dart and/or a ball sealing member. In this manner, the fluid passage 740 can be sealed off by introducing a plug, dart and/or ball sealing elements into the inlet 830.

The apparatus 700 further includes one or more seals 845 coupled to and supported by the end portion 820 of the tubular member 715. The seals 845 are further positioned on an outer surface of the end portion 820 of the tubular member 715. The seals 845 permit the overlapping joint between an end portion of preexisting casing and the end portion 820 of the tubular member 715 to be fluidically sealed. The seals 845 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available seals such as, for example, lead, rubber, Teflon, or epoxy seals modified in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure. The seals 845 comprise seals molded from StrataLock epoxy available from Halliburton Energy Services in Dallas, TX in order to optimally provide a hydraulic seal and a load bearing interference fit in the overlapping joint between the tubular member 715 and an existing casing with optimal load bearing capacity to support the tubular member 715.

The seals 845 are selected to provide a sufficient frictional force to support the expanded tubular member 715 from the existing casing. The frictional force provided

by the seals 845 ranges from about 1,000 to 1,000,000 lbf in order to optimally support the expanded tubular member 715.

The support member 745 is preferably coupled to the expandable mandrel 705 and the overshot connection 755. The support member 745 preferably comprises an annular member having sufficient strength to carry the apparatus 700 into a new section of a wellbore. The support member 745 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available support members such as, for example, steel drill pipe, coiled tubing or other high strength tubular modified in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure. The support member 745 comprises conventional drill pipe available from various steel mills in the United States.

A body of lubricant 750 is provided in the annular region above the expandable mandrel container 710 within the interior of the tubular member 715. In this manner, the extrusion of the tubular member 715 off of the expandable mandrel 705 is facilitated. The lubricant 750 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available lubricants such as, for example, Lubriplate, chlorine based lubricants, oil based lubricants, or Climax 1500 Antisieze (3100). The lubricant 750 comprises Climax 1500 Antisieze (3100) available from Halliburton Energy Services in Houston, TX in order to optimally provide lubrication to facilitate the extrusion process.

The overshot connection 755 is coupled to the support member 745 and the support member 760. The overshot connection 755 preferably permits the support member 745 to be removably coupled to the support member 760. The overshot connection 755 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available overshot connections such as, for example, Innerstring Sealing Adapter, Innerstring Flat-Face Sealing Adapter or EZ Drill Setting Tool Stinger. The overshot connection 755 comprises a Innerstring Adapter with an Upper Guide available from Halliburton Energy Services in Dallas, TX.

The support member 760 is prefcrably coupled to the overshot connection 755 and a surface support structure (not illustrated). The support member 760 preferably comprises an annular member having sufficient strength to carry the apparatus 700 into a new section of a wellbore. The support member 760 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available support members such as, for example, steel drill

pipe, coiled tubing or other high strength tubulars modified in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure. The support member 760 comprises a conventional drill pipe available from steel mills in the United States.

- The stabilizer 765 is preferably coupled to the support member 760. The
- 5 stabilizer 765 also preferably stabilizes the components of the apparatus 700 within the tubular member 715. The stabilizer 765 preferably comprises a spherical member having an outside diameter that is about 80 to 99% of the interior diameter of the tubular member 715 in order to optimally minimize buckling of the tubular member 715. The stabilizer 765 may comprise any number of conventional commercially
- 10 available stabilizers such as, for example, EZ Drill Star Guides, packer shoes or drag blocks modified in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure. The stabilizer 765 comprises a scaling adapter upper guide available from Halliburton Energy Services in Dallas, TX.

The support members 745 and 760 are thoroughly cleaned prior to assembly to

15 the remaining portions of the apparatus 700. In this manner, the introduction of foreign material into the apparatus 700 is minimized. This minimizes the possibility of foreign material clogging the various flow passages and valves of the apparatus 700.

- Before or after positioning the apparatus 700 within a new section of a wellbore, a couple of wellbore volumes are circulated through the various flow
- 20 passages of the apparatus 700 in order to ensure that no foreign materials are located within the wellbore that might clog up the various flow passages and valves of the apparatus 700 and to ensure that no foreign material interferes with the expansion mandrel 705 during the expansion process.

The apparatus 700 is operated substantially as described above with reference

25 to Figs. 1-7 to form a new section of casing within a wellbore.

- As illustrated in Fig. 8, the method and apparatus described herein is used to repair an existing wellbore casing 805 by forming a tubular liner 810 inside of the existing wellbore casing 805. An outer annular lining of cement is not provided in the repaired section. Any number of fluidic materials can be used to expand the tubular
- 30 liner 810 into intimate contact with the damaged section of the wellbore casing such as, for example, cement, epoxy, slag mix, or drilling mud. Scaling members 815 are preferably provided at both ends of the tubular member in order to optimally provide a

fluidic seal. The tubular liner 810 is formed within a horizontally positioned pipeline section, such as those used to transport hydrocarbons or water, with the tubular liner 810 placed in an overlapping relationship with the adjacent pipeline section. In this manner, underground pipelines can be repaired without having to dig out and replace

5 the damaged sections.

The method and apparatus described herein is used to directly line a wellbore with a tubular liner 810. An outer annular lining of cement is not provided between the tubular liner 810 and the wellbore. Any number of fluidic materials can be used to expand the tubular liner 810 into intimate contact with the wellbore such as, for

10 example, cement, epoxy, slag mix, or drilling mud.

Referring now to Figs. 9, 9a, 9b and 9c, an apparatus 900 for forming a wellbore casing includes an expandible tubular member 902, a support member 904, an expandible mandrel or pig 906, and a shoe 908. The design and construction of the mandrel 906 and shoe 908 permits easy removal of those elements by drilling them

15 out. In this manner, the assembly 900 can be easily removed from a wellbore using a conventional drilling apparatus and corresponding drilling methods.

The expandible tubular member 902 preferably includes an upper portion 910, an intermediate portion 912 and a lower portion 914. During operation of the apparatus 900, the tubular member 902 is preferably extruded off of the mandrel 906

20 by pressurizing an interior region 966 of the tubular member 902. The tubular member 902 preferably has a substantially annular cross-section.

An expandable tubular member 915 is coupled to the upper portion 910 of the expandable tubular member 902. During operation of the apparatus 900, the tubular member 915 is preferably extruded off of the mandrel 906 by pressurizing the interior

25 region 966 of the tubular member 902. The tubular member 915 preferably has a substantially annular cross-section. The wall thickness of the tubular member 915 is greater than the wall thickness of the tubular member 902.

The tubular member 915 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials such as, for example, oilfield tubulars, low alloy

30 steels, titanium or stainless steels. The tubular member 915 is fabricated from oilfield tubulars in order to optimally provide approximately the same mechanical properties as the tubular member 902. The tubular member 915 has a plastic yield point ranging

from about 40,000 to 135,000 psi in order to optimally provide approximately the same yield properties as the tubular member 902. The tubular member 915 may comprise a plurality of tubular members coupled end to end.

- The upper end portion of the tubular member 915 includes one or more sealing members for optimally providing a fluidic and/or gaseous seal with an existing section of wellbore casing.

- The combined length of the tubular members 902 and 915 are limited to minimize the possibility of buckling. For typical tubular member materials, the combined length of the tubular members 902 and 915 are limited to between about 40 to 20,000 feet in length.

The lower portion 914 of the tubular member 902 is preferably coupled to the shoe 908 by a threaded connection 968. The intermediate portion 912 of the tubular member 902 preferably is placed in intimate sliding contact with the mandrel 906.

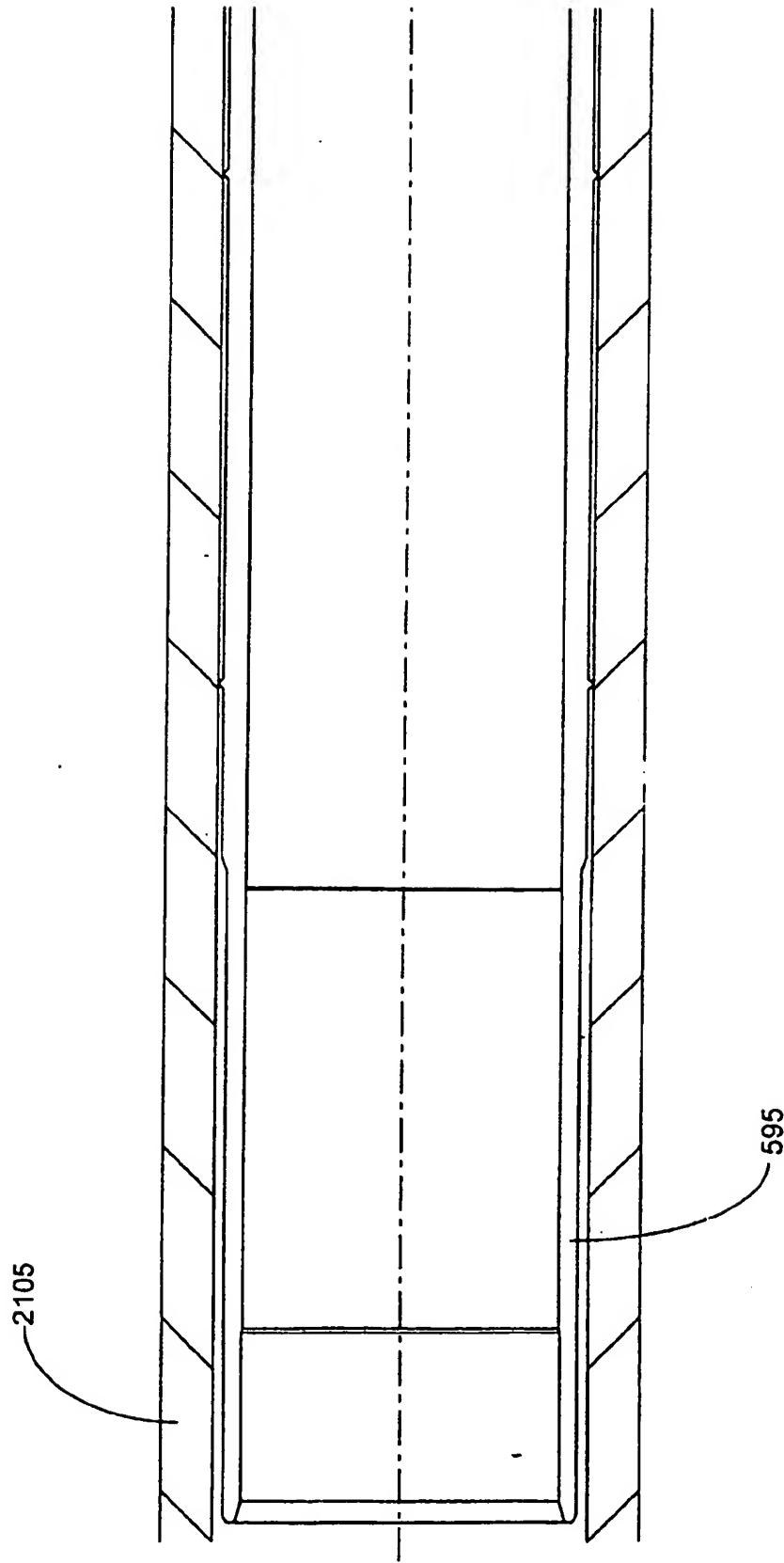
- The tubular member 902 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials such as, for example, oilfield tubulars, low alloy steels, titanium or stainless steels. The tubular member 902 is fabricated from oilfield tubulars in order to optimally provide approximately the same mechanical properties as the tubular member 915. The tubular member 902 has a plastic yield point ranging from about 40,000 to 135,000 psi in order to optimally provide approximately the same yield properties as the tubular member 915.

- The wall thickness of the upper, intermediate, and lower portions, 910, 912 and 914 of the tubular member 902 may range, for example, from about 1/16 to 1.5 inches. The wall thickness of the upper, intermediate, and lower portions, 910, 912 and 914 of the tubular member 902 range from about 1/8 to 1.25 in order to optimally provide wall thickness that are about the same as the tubular member 915. The wall thickness of the lower portion 914 is less than or equal to the wall thickness of the upper portion 910 in order to optimally provide a geometry that will fit into tight clearances downhole.

- The outer diameter of the upper, intermediate, and lower portions, 910, 912 and 914 of the tubular member 902 may range, for example, from about 1.05 to 48 inches. The outer diameter of the upper, intermediate, and lower portions, 910, 912 and 914 of

FIGURE 12A

7279



73779

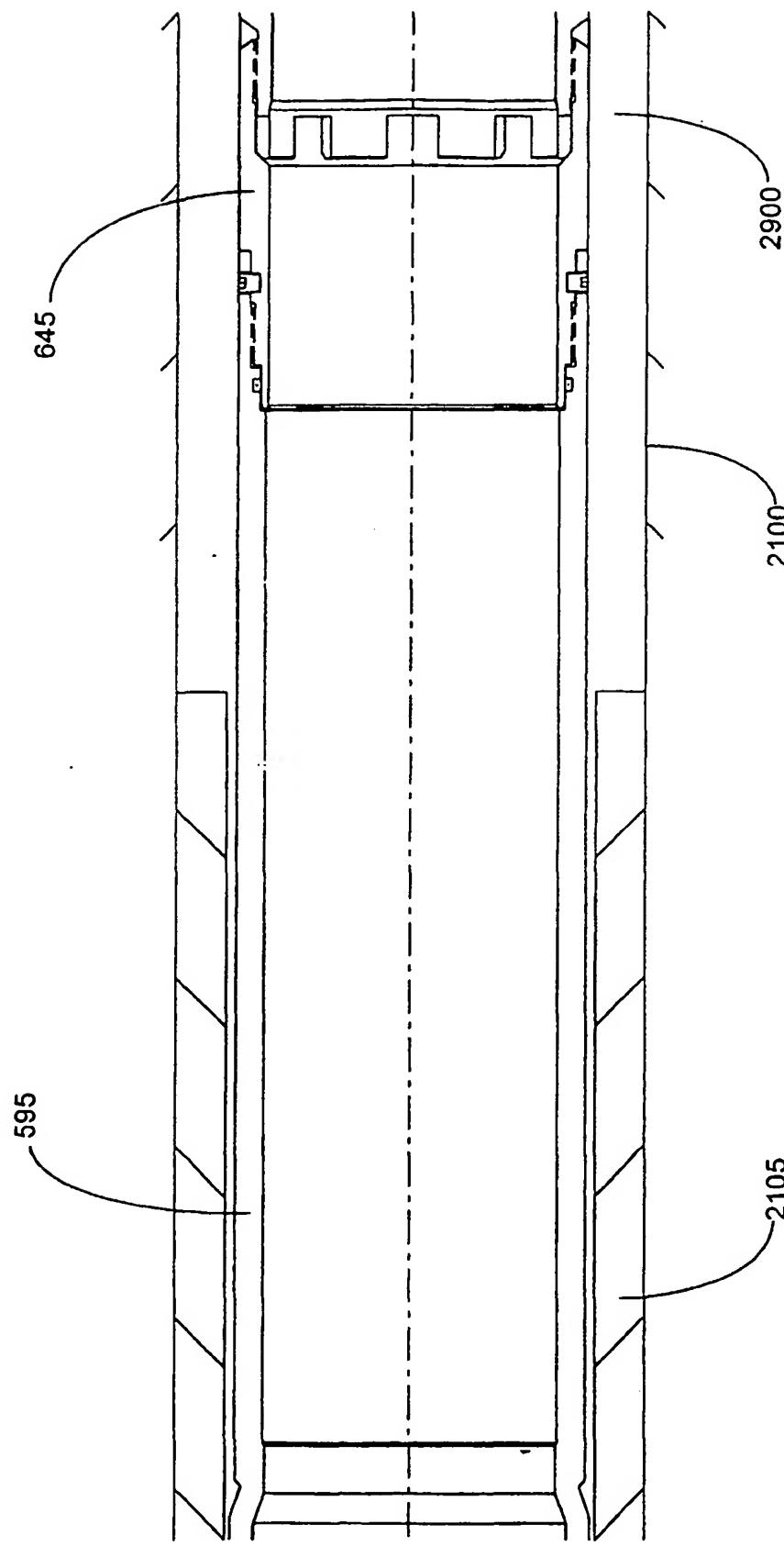


FIGURE 12B

74/79

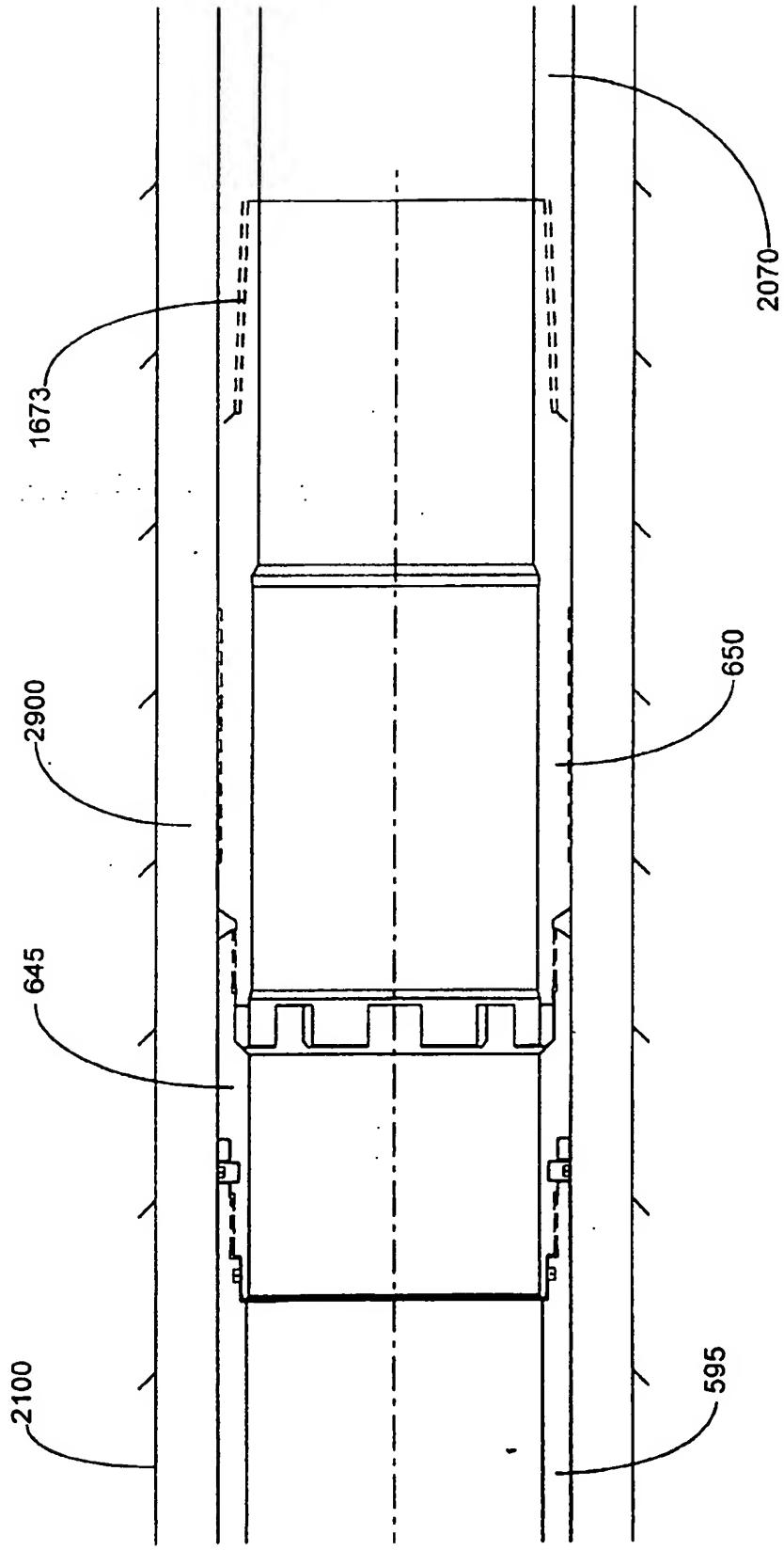


FIGURE 12C

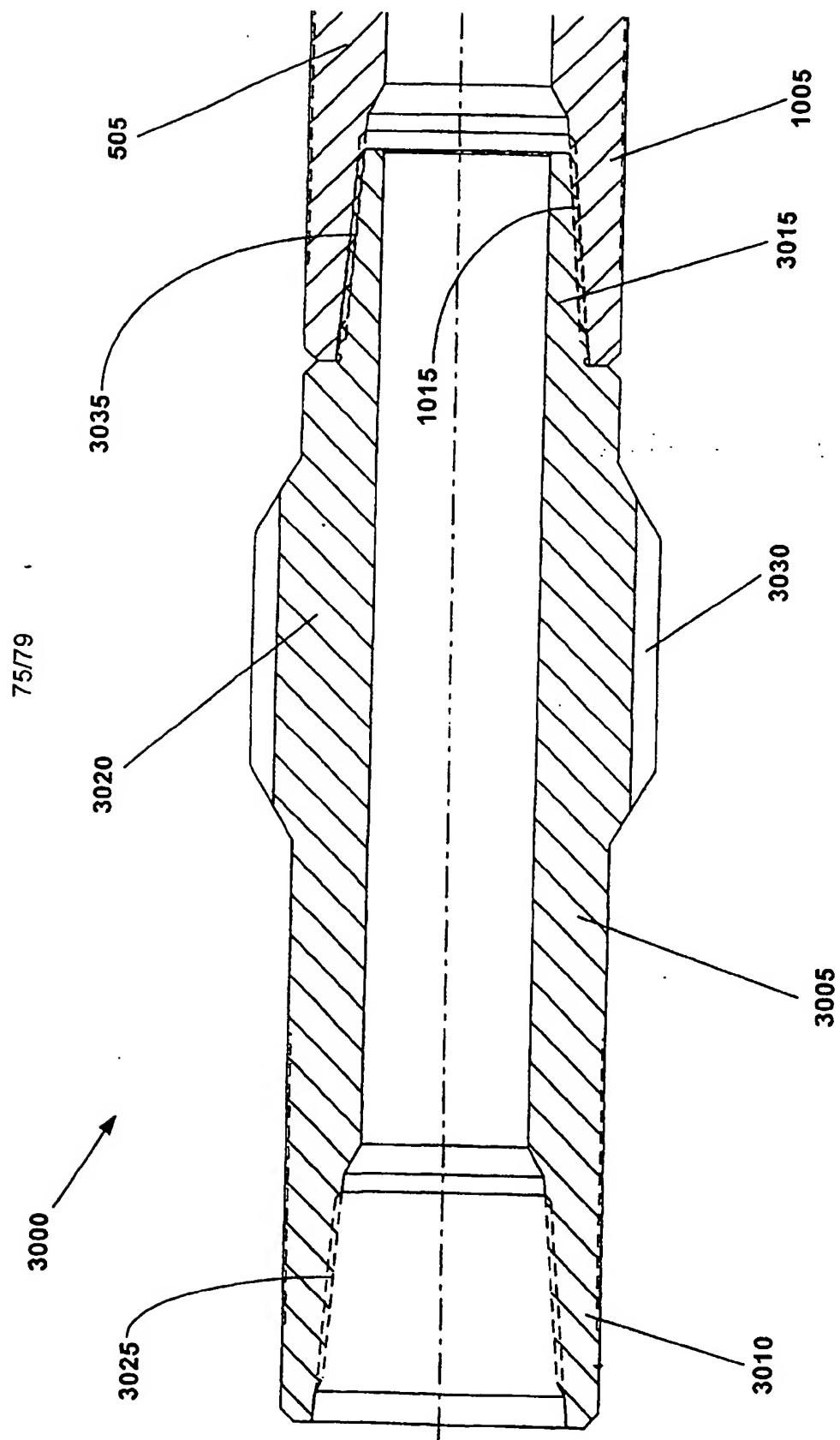


FIGURE 13A

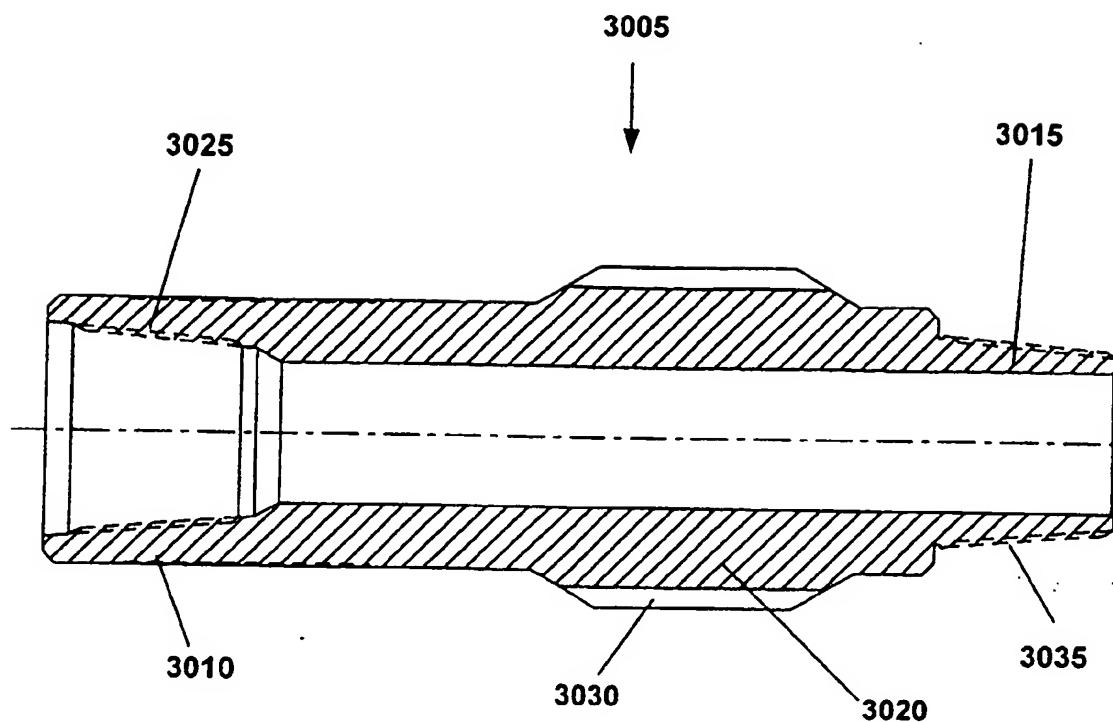


FIGURE 13B

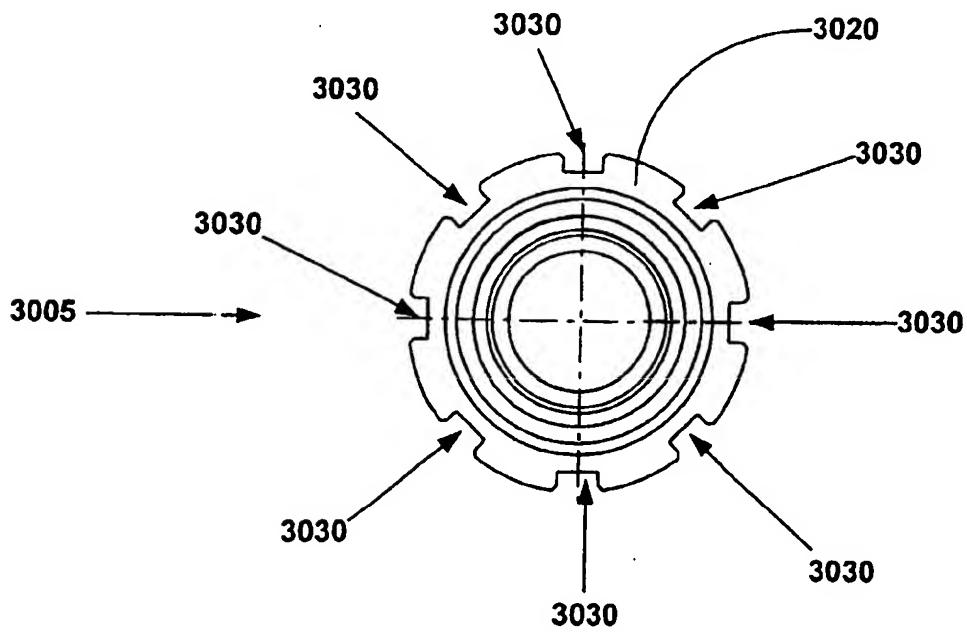


FIGURE 13G

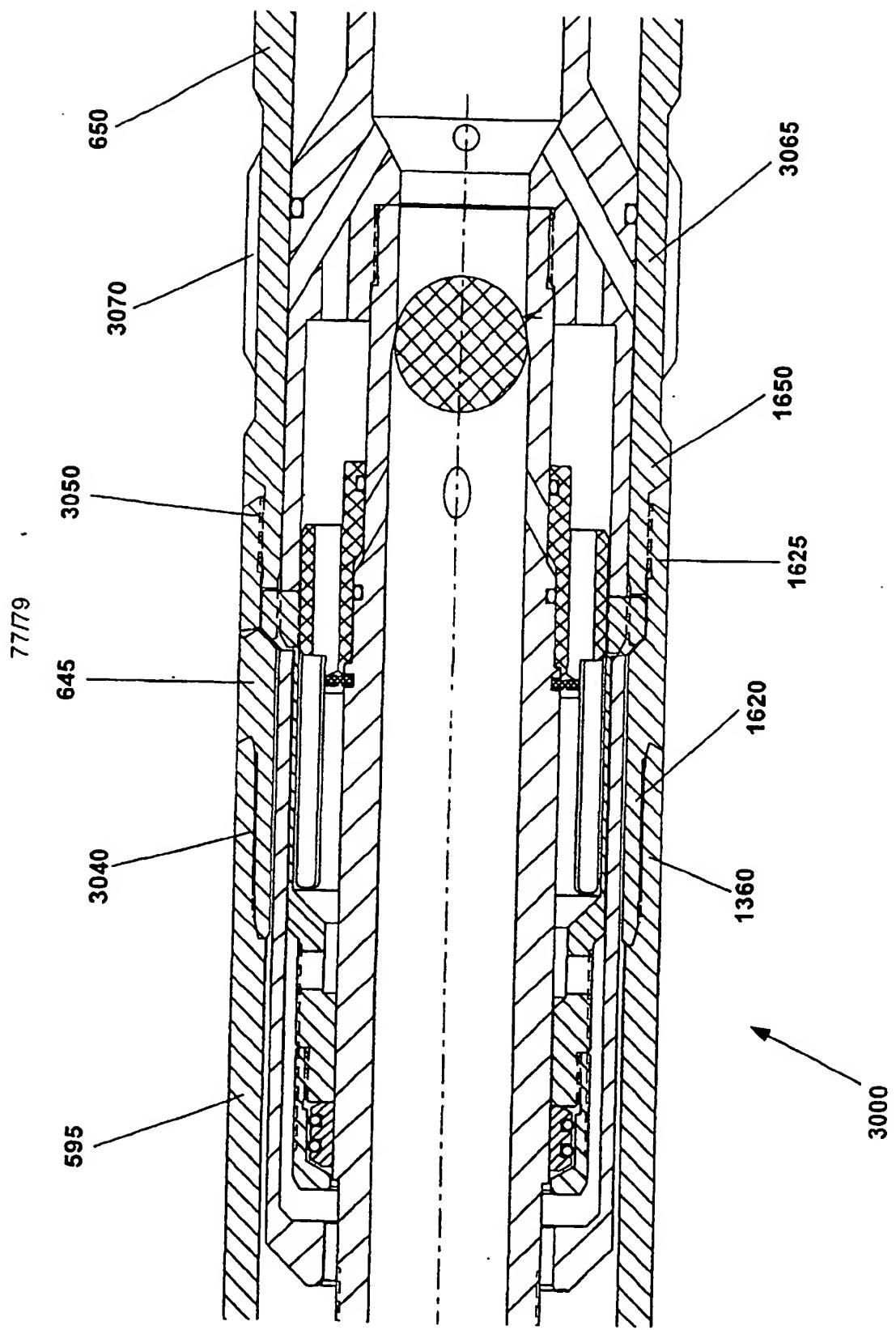


FIGURE 13D

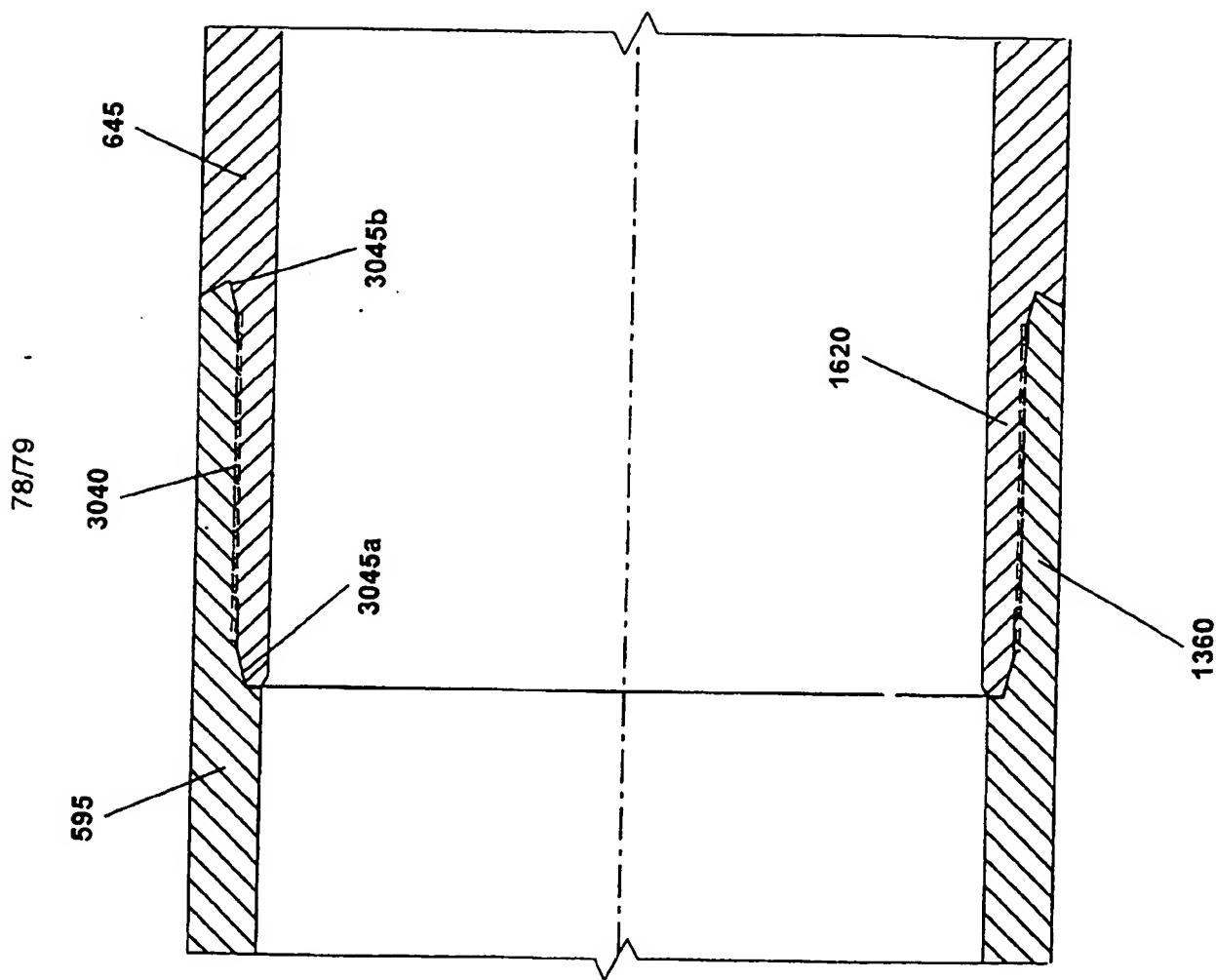


FIGURE 13E

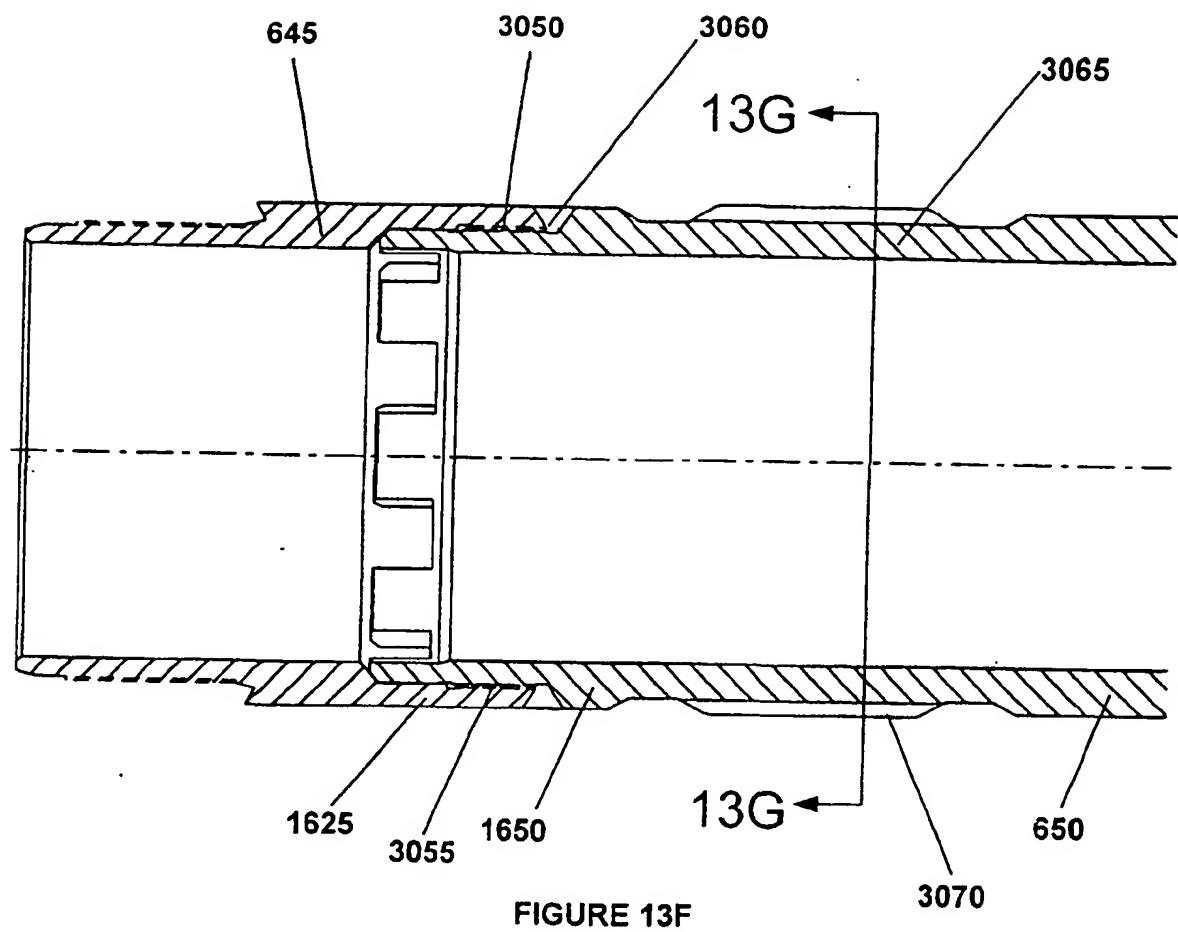


FIGURE 13F

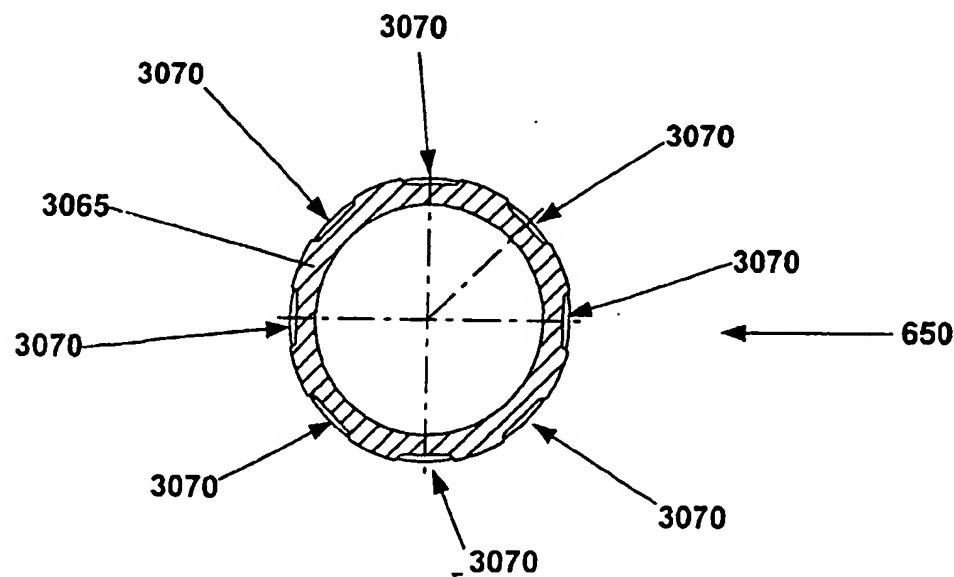


FIGURE 13G

23853

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## AN EXPANDED TUBULAR MEMBER COUPLED TO A PRE-EXISTING STRUCTURE

### Background of the Invention

This invention relates to an expanded tubular member coupled to a pre-existing  
5 structure.

Conventionally, when a wellbore is created, a number of casings are installed in  
the borehole to prevent collapse of the borehole wall and to prevent undesired outflow  
of drilling fluid into the formation or inflow of fluid from the formation into the  
borehole. The borehole is drilled in intervals whereby a casing which is to be installed  
10 in a lower borehole interval is lowered through a previously installed casing of an upper  
borehole interval. As a consequence of this procedure the casing of the lower interval  
is of smaller diameter than the casing of the upper interval. Thus, the casings are in a  
nested arrangement with casing diameters decreasing in downward direction. Cement  
annuli are provided between the outer surfaces of the casings and the borehole wall to  
15 seal the casings from the borehole wall. As a consequence of this nested arrangement a  
relatively large borehole diameter is required at the upper part of the wellbore. Such a  
large borehole diameter involves increased costs due to heavy casing handling  
equipment, large drill bits and increased volumes of drilling fluid and drill cuttings.  
Moreover, increased drilling rig time is involved due to required cement pumping,  
20 cement hardening, required equipment changes due to large variations in hole diameters  
drilled in the course of the well, and the large volume of cuttings drilled and removed.

Conventionally, at the surface end of the wellbore, a wellhead is formed that  
typically includes a surface casing, a number of production and/or drilling spools,  
valving, and a Christmas tree. Typically the wellhead further includes a concentric  
25 arrangement of casings including a production casing and one or more intermediate  
casings. The casings are typically supported using load bearing slips positioned above  
the ground. The conventional design and construction of wellheads is expensive and  
complex.

The present invention is directed to overcoming one or more of the limitations of the existing procedures for forming wellbores and wellheads.

#### Summary of the Invention

- 5        According to the present invention there is provided an apparatus, comprising: a pre-existing structure; and an expanded tubular member coupled to the pre-existing structure; wherein the expanded tubular member is coupled to the pre-existing structure by the process of: positioning a support member, an expansion cone, and the tubular member within the pre-existing structure; injecting a first quantity of a fluidic material  
10      into the pre-existing structure below the expansion cone; and injecting a second quantity of a fluidic material into the pre-existing structure above the expansion cone and below the support structure.

Preferably, injecting the second quantity of the fluidic material comprises pressurizing a chamber above the expansion cone to a first pressure.

15      Preferably, injecting the first quantity of the fluidic material comprises pressurizing a chamber below the expansion cone to a second pressure.

Preferably, the first pressure is greater than the second pressure.

Preferably, the method further comprises displacing the expansion cone downwardly away from the support structure.

20      Preferably, the chamber above the expansion cone has a greater pressure than a chamber below the expansion cone.

Preferably, the displacing the expansion cone comprises increasing a diameter of the tubular member.

### Brief Description of the Drawings

For a better understanding of the present invention, and to show more clearly how it may be carried into effect, reference will now be made, by way of example, to the accompanying drawings, in which:-

- 5      FIG. 1A is a cross-sectional view illustrating the placement of an apparatus for creating a casing within a well borehole.
- FIG. 1B is a cross-sectional view illustrating the injection of a fluidic material into the well borehole of FIG. 1A.
- 10     FIG. 1C is a cross-sectional view illustrating the injection of a wiper plug into the apparatus of FIG. 1B.
- FIG. 1D is a fragmentary cross-sectional view illustrating the injection of a ball plug and a fluidic material into the apparatus of FIG. 1C.
- 15     FIG. 1E is a fragmentary cross-sectional view illustrating the continued injection of fluidic material into the apparatus of FIG. 1D in order to radially expand a tubular member.
- FIG. 1F is a cross-sectional view of the completed wellbore casing.
- FIG. 2A is a cross-sectional illustration of a portion of an apparatus for forming and/or repairing a wellbore, pipeline or structural support.
- 20     FIG. 2B is an enlarged illustration of a portion of the apparatus of FIG. 2A.
- FIG. 2C is an enlarged illustration of a portion of the apparatus of FIG. 2A.
- FIG. 2D is an enlarged illustration of a portion of the apparatus of FIG. 2A.
- FIG. 2E is a cross-sectional illustration of the apparatus of FIG. 2A.
- FIG. 2F is a cross-sectional illustration of another portion of the apparatus of FIG. 2A.
- 25     FIG. 2G is an enlarged illustration of a portion of the apparatus of FIG. 2F.
- FIG. 2H is an enlarged illustration of a portion of the apparatus of FIG. 2F.
- FIG. 2I is an enlarged illustration of a portion of the apparatus of FIG. 2F.
- FIG. 2J is a cross-sectional illustration of another portion of the apparatus of FIG. 2A.

- FIG. 2K is an enlarged illustration of a portion of the apparatus of FIG. 2J.  
FIG. 2L is an enlarged illustration of a portion of the apparatus of FIG. 2J.  
FIG. 2M is an enlarged illustration of a portion of the apparatus of FIG. 2J.  
FIG. 2N is an enlarged illustration of a portion of the apparatus of FIG. 2J.
- 5 FIG. 2O is a cross-sectional illustration of the apparatus of FIG. 2J.  
FIGS. 3A to 3D are exploded views of a portion of the apparatus of FIGS. 2A to 2O.
- FIG. 3E is a cross-sectional illustration of the outer collet support member and the liner hanger setting sleeve of the apparatus of FIGS. 2A to 2O.
- 10 FIG. 3F is a front view of the locking dog spring of the apparatus of FIGS. 2A to 2O.
- FIG. 3G is a front view of the locking dogs of the apparatus of FIGS. 2A to 2O.  
FIG. 3H is a front view of the collet assembly of the apparatus of FIGS. 2A to 2O.
- 15 FIG. 3I is a front view of the collet retaining sleeve of the apparatus of FIGS. 2A to 2O.
- FIG. 3J is a front view of the collet retaining adaptor of the apparatus of FIGS. 2A to 2O.
- 20 FIGS. 4A to 4G are fragmentary cross-sectional illustrations of a method for placing the apparatus of FIGS. 2A-2O within a wellbore.
- FIGS. 5A to 5C are fragmentary cross-sectional illustrations of a method for decoupling the liner hanger, the outer collet support member, and the liner hanger setting sleeve from the apparatus of FIGS. 4A to 4G.
- 25 FIGS. 6A to 6C are fragmentary cross-sectional illustrations of a method for releasing the lead wiper from the apparatus of FIGS. 4A to 4G.
- FIGS. 7A to 7G are fragmentary cross-sectional illustration of a method for cementing the region outside of the apparatus of FIGS. 6A to 6C.
- FIGS. 8A to 8C are fragmentary cross-sectional illustrations of a method for releasing the tail wiper from the apparatus of FIGS. 7A to 7G.

FIGS. 9A to 9H are fragmentary cross-sectional illustrations of a method of radially expanding the liner hanger of the apparatus of FIGS. 8A to 8C.

FIGS. 10A to 10E are fragmentary cross-sectional illustrations of the completion of the radial expansion of the liner hanger using the apparatus of FIGS. 9A to 9H.

5 FIGS. 11A to 11E are fragmentary cross-sectional illustrations of the decoupling of the radially expanded liner hanger from the apparatus of FIGS. 10A to 10E.

FIGS. 12A to 12C are fragmentary cross-sectional illustrations of the completed wellbore casing.

10 FIG. 13A is a cross-sectional illustration of a portion of the alternative apparatus for forming and/or repairing a wellbore, pipeline or structural support.

FIG. 13B is a cross-sectional view of the standoff adaptor of the apparatus of FIG. 13A.

FIG. 13C is a front view of the standoff adaptor of FIG. 13B.

15 FIG. 13D is a cross-sectional illustration of another portion of an alternative embodiment of the apparatus of FIG. 13A.

FIG. 13E is an enlarged view of the threaded connection between the liner hanger and the outer collet support member of FIG. 13D.

FIG. 13F is an enlarged view of the connection between the outer collet support member 645 and the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 of FIG. 13D.

20 FIG. 13G is a cross-sectional view of the liner hanger setting sleeve of FIG. 13F.

#### Detailed Description

Referring initially to Figs. 1A-1F, an apparatus and method for forming a wellbore casing within a subterranean formation will now be described. As illustrated 25 in Fig. 1A, a wellbore 100 is positioned in a subterranean formation 105. The wellbore 100 includes an existing cased section 110 having a tubular casing 115 and an annular outer layer of cement 120.

As illustrated in Fig. 1A, an apparatus 200 for forming a wellbore casing in a subterranean formation is then positioned in the wellbore 100.

The apparatus 200 preferably includes a first support member 205, a manifold 210, a second support member 215, a tubular member 220, a shoe 225, an expansion cone 230, first sealing members 235, second sealing members 240, third sealing members 245, fourth sealing members 250, an anchor 255, a first passage 260, a second passage 265, a third passage 270, a fourth passage 275, a throat 280, a fifth passage 285, a sixth passage 290, a seventh passage 295, an annular chamber 300, a chamber 305, and a chamber 310. The apparatus 200 is used to radially expand the tubular member 220 into intimate contact with the tubular casing 115. In this manner, the tubular member 220 is coupled to the tubular casing 115. In this manner, the apparatus 200 is preferably used to form or repair a wellbore casing, a pipeline, or a structural support. In a particular, the apparatus may be used to repair or form a wellbore casing.

The first support member 205 is coupled to a conventional surface support and the manifold 210. The first support member 205 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available tubular support members. The first support member 205 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength of about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The first support member 205 preferably further includes the first passage 260 and the second passage 265.

The manifold 210 is coupled to the first support member 205, the second support member 215, the sealing members 235a and 235b, and the tubular member 220. The manifold 210 preferably includes the first passage 260, the third passage 270, the fourth passage 275, the throat 280 and the fifth passage 285. The manifold 210 may be fabricated from any number of conventional tubular members.

The second support member 215 is coupled to the manifold 210, the sealing members 245a, 245b, and 245c, and the expansion cone 230. The second support member 215 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available tubular support members. The second support member 215 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength of about 75,000 to 140,000

psi in order to provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The second support member 215 preferably further includes the fifth passage 285.

- The tubular member 220 is coupled to the sealing members 235a and 235b and the shoe 225. The tubular member 220 is further movably coupled to the expansion cone 230 and the sealing members 240a and 240b. The first support member 205 may comprise any number of conventional tubular members. The tubular member 220 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available tubular members. The tubular member 220 is preferably further provided substantially as described in one or more of the following: (1) U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10 09/440,338, attorney docket number 25791.9.02, filed on 11/15/1999 now United States Patent 6,328,113, which claimed benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/108,558, attorney docket number 25791.9, filed on 11/16/1998, (2) U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/454,139, attorney docket number 25791.3.02, filed on 12/31/1999 now United States Patent 6,497,289, which claimed 15 benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/111,293, filed on 12/7/1998, (3) U.S. Patent Application Serial Number 09/502,350, attorney docket number 25791.8.02, filed on 2/10/2000, which claimed the benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/119,611, attorney docket number 25791.8, filed 2/11/1999, (4) U.S. Patent Application Serial 20 Number 09/510,913, attorney docket number 25791.7.02, filed on 2/23/2000, which claimed the benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/121,702, attorney docket number 25791.7, filed on 2/25/1999, (5) U.S. Patent Application Serial Number 09/511,941, attorney docket number 25791.16.02, filed on 2/24/2000 now United States Patent 6,575,240, which claimed the benefit of 25 the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application number 60/121,907, attorney docket number 25791.16, filed 2/26/1999, (6) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/124,042, attorney docket number 25791.11, filed on 3/11/1999, (7) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/131,106, attorney docket number 25791.23, filed on 4/26/1999, (8) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number

60/137,998, attorney docket number 25791.17, filed on 6/7/1999, (9) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/143,039, attorney docket number 25791.26, filed on 7/9/1999, and (10) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/146,203, attorney docket number 25791.25, filed on 7/29/1999, the disclosures of which are  
5 incorporated by reference.

- The shoe 225 is coupled to the tubular member 220. The shoe 225 preferably includes the sixth passage 290 and the seventh passage 295. The shoe 225 preferably is fabricated from a tubular member. The shoe 225 is preferably provided substantially as described in one or more of the following: (1) U.S. Patent Application Serial No.  
10 09/440,338, attorney docket number 25791.9.02, filed on 11/15/1999 now United States Patent 6,328,113, which claimed benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/108,558, attorney docket number 25791.9, filed on 11/16/1998, (2) U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/454,139, attorney docket number 25791.3.02, filed on 12/31/1999 now United States Patent 6,497,289, which claimed  
15 benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/111,293, filed on 12/7/1998, (3) U.S. Patent Application Serial Number 09/502,350, attorney docket number 25791.8.02, filed on 2/10/2000, which claimed the benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/119,611, attorney docket number 25791.8, filed 2/11/1999, (4) U.S. Patent Application Serial  
20 Number 09/510,913, attorney docket number 25791.7.02, filed on 2/23/2000, which claimed the benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/121,702, attorney docket number 25791.7, filed on 2/25/1999, (5) U.S. Patent Application Serial Number 09/511,941, attorney docket number 25791.16.02, filed on 2/24/2000 now United States Patent 6,575,240, which claimed the benefit of  
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5 incorporated by reference.

- The expansion cone 230 is coupled to the sealing members 240a and 240b and the sealing members 245a, 245b, and 245c. The expansion cone 230 is movably coupled to the second support member 215 and the tubular member 220. The expansion cone 230 preferably includes an annular member having one or more outer  
10 conical surfaces for engaging the inside diameter of the tubular member 220. In this manner, axial movement of the expansion cone 230 radially expands the tubular member 220. The expansion cone 230 is preferably further provided substantially as described in one or more of the following: (1) U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/440,338, attorney docket number 25791.9.02, filed on 11/15/1999 now United States  
15 Patent 6,328,113, which claimed benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/108,558, attorney docket number 25791.9, filed on 11/16/1998, (2) U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/454,139, attorney docket number 25791.3.02, filed on 12/31/1999 now United States Patent 6,497,289, which claimed benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number  
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- 5 60/137,998, attorney docket number 25791.17, filed on 6/7/1999, (9) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/143,039, attorney docket number 25791.26, filed on 7/9/1999, and (10) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/146,203, attorney docket number 25791.25, filed on 7/29/1999, the disclosures of which are incorporated by reference.

- 10 The first sealing members 235a and 235b are coupled to the manifold 210 and the tubular member 220. The first sealing members 235a and 235b preferably fluidically isolate the annular chamber 300 from the chamber 310. In this manner, annular chamber 300 is optimally pressurized during operation of the apparatus 200. The first sealing members 235a and 235b may comprise any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The first sealing members 235a and 235b preferably include O-rings with seal backups available from Parker Seals in order to provide a fluidic seal between the tubular member 220 and the expansion cone 230 during axial movement of the expansion cone 230.

- 15 The first sealing member 235a and 235b preferably further include conventional controllable latching members for removably coupling the manifold 210 to the tubular member 220. In this manner, the tubular member 220 is optimally supported by the manifold 210. Alternatively, the tubular member 220 is preferably removably supported by the first support member 205 using conventional controllable latching members.

- 20 The second sealing members 240a and 240b are coupled to the expansion cone 230. The second sealing members 240a and 240b are movably coupled to the tubular member 220. The second sealing members 240a and 240b preferably fluidically isolate the annular chamber 300 from the chamber 305 during axial movement of the expansion cone 230. In this manner, the annular chamber 300 is optimally pressurized.

The second sealing members 240a and 240b may comprise any number of conventional commercially available sealing members.

The second sealing members 240a and 240b preferably further include a conventional centralizer and/or bearings for supporting and positioning the expansion cone 230 within the tubular member 220 during axial movement of the expansion cone 230. In this manner, the position and orientation of the expansion cone 230 is optimally controlled during axial movement of the expansion cone 230.

The third sealing members 245a, 245b, and 245c are coupled to the expansion cone 230. The third sealing members 245a, 245b, and 245c are movably coupled to the second support member 215. The third sealing members 245a, 245b, and 245c preferably fluidically isolate the annular chamber 300 from the chamber 305 during axial movement of the expansion cone 230. In this manner, the annular chamber 300 is optimally pressurized. The third sealing members 245a, 245b and 245c may comprise any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The third sealing members 245a, 245b, and 245c preferably include O-rings with seal backups available from Parker Seals in order to provide a fluidic seal between the expansion cone 230 and the second support member 215 during axial movement of the expansion cone 230.

The third sealing members 245a, 245b and 245c preferably further include a conventional centralizer and/or bearings for supporting and positioning the expansion cone 230 around the second support member 215 during axial movement of the expansion cone 230. In this manner, the position and orientation of the expansion cone 230 is optimally controlled during axial movement of the expansion cone 230.

The fourth sealing member 250 is coupled to the tubular member 220. The fourth sealing member 250 preferably fluidically isolates the chamber 315 after radial expansion of the tubular member 220. In this manner, the chamber 315 outside of the radially expanded tubular member 220 is fluidically isolated. The fourth sealing member 250 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available sealing

members. The fourth sealing member 250 is preferably a RTTS packer ring available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide a fluidic seal.

The anchor 255 is coupled to the tubular member 220. The anchor 255 preferably anchors the tubular member 220 to the casing 115 after radial expansion of the tubular member 220. In this manner, the radially expanded tubular member 220 is optimally supported within the wellbore 100. The anchor 255 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available anchoring devices. The anchor 255 preferably includes RTTS mechanical slips available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally anchor the tubular member 220 to the casing 115 after the radial expansion of the tubular member 220.

The first passage 260 is fluidically coupled to a conventional surface pump, the second passage 265, the third passage 270, the fourth passage 275, and the throat 280. The first passage 260 is preferably adapted to convey fluidic materials including drilling mud, cement and/or lubricants at flow rates and pressures ranging from about 0 to 650 gallons/minute and 0 to 10,000 psi, respectively in order to optimally form an annular cement liner and radially expand the tubular member 220.

The second passage 265 is fluidically coupled to the first passage 260 and the chamber 310. The second passage 265 is preferably adapted to controllably convey fluidic materials from the first passage 260 to the chamber 310. In this manner, surge pressures during placement of the apparatus 200 within the wellbore 100 are optimally minimized. The second passage 265 preferably further includes a valve for controlling the flow of fluidic materials through the second passage 265.

The third passage 270 is fluidically coupled to the first passage 260 and the annular chamber 300. The third passage 270 is preferably adapted to convey fluidic materials between the first passage 260 and the annular chamber 300. In this manner, the annular chamber 300 is optimally pressurized.

The fourth passage 275 is fluidically coupled to the first passage 260, the fifth passage 285, and the chamber 310. The fourth passage 275 is preferably adapted to convey fluidic materials between the fifth passage 285 and the chamber 310. In this

manner, during the radial expansion of the tubular member 220, fluidic materials from the chamber 305 are transmitted to the chamber 310. The fourth passage 275 preferably further includes a pressure compensated valve and/or a pressure compensated orifice in order to optimally control the flow of fluidic materials through  
5 the fourth passage 275.

The throat 280 is fluidically coupled to the first passage 260 and the fifth passage 285. The throat 280 is preferably adapted to receive a conventional fluidic plug or ball. In this manner, the first passage 260 is fluidically isolated from the fifth passage 285.

10 The fifth passage 285 is fluidically coupled to the throat 280, the fourth passage 275, and the chamber 305. The fifth passage 285 is preferably adapted to convey fluidic materials to and from the first passage 260, the fourth passage 275, and the chamber 305.

15 The sixth passage 290 is fluidically coupled to the chamber 305 and the seventh passage 295. The sixth passage is preferably adapted to convey fluidic materials to and from the chamber 305. The sixth passage 290 is further preferably adapted to receive a conventional plug or dart. In this manner, the chamber 305 is optimally fluidically isolated from the chamber 315.

20 The seventh passage 295 is fluidically coupled to the sixth passage 290 and the chamber 315. The seventh passage 295 is preferably adapted to convey fluidic materials between the sixth passage 290 and the chamber 315.

The annular chamber 300 is fluidically coupled to the third passage 270. Pressurization of the annular chamber 300 preferably causes the expansion cone 230 to be displaced in the axial direction. In this manner, the tubular member 220 is radially expanded by the expansion cone 230. During operation of the apparatus 200, the  
25 annular chamber 300 is preferably adapted to be pressurized to operating pressures ranging from about 1000 to 10000 psi in order to optimally radially expand the tubular member 220.

The chamber 305 is fluidically coupled to the fifth passage 285 and the sixth passage 290. During operation of the apparatus 200, the chamber 305 is preferably

fluidically isolated from the annular chamber 300 and the chamber 315 and fluidically coupled to the chamber 310.

The chamber 310 is fluidically coupled to the fourth passage 275. During operation of the apparatus 200, the chamber 310 is preferably fluidically isolated from the annular chamber 300 and fluidically coupled to the chamber 305.

During operation, as illustrated in FIG. 1A, the apparatus 200 is preferably placed within the wellbore 100 in a predetermined overlapping relationship with the preexisting casing 115. During placement of the apparatus 200 within the wellbore 100, fluidic materials within the chamber 315 are preferably conveyed to the chamber 310 using the second, first, fifth, sixth and seventh fluid passages 265, 260, 285, 290 and 295, respectively. In this manner, surge pressures within the wellbore 100 during placement of the apparatus 200 are minimized. Once the apparatus 200 has been placed at the predetermined location within the wellbore 100, the second passage 265 is preferably closed using a conventional valve member.

As illustrated in FIG. 1B, one or more volumes of a non-hardenable fluidic material are then injected into the chamber 315 using the first, fifth, sixth and seventh passages, 260, 285, 290 and 295 in order to ensure that all of the passages are clear. A quantity of a hardenable fluidic sealing material such as, for example, cement, is then preferably injected into the chamber 315 using the first, fifth, sixth and seventh passages 260, 285, 290 and 295. In this manner, an annular outer sealing layer is preferably formed around the radially expanded tubular member 220.

As illustrated in FIG. 1C, a conventional wiper plug 320 is then preferably injected into the first passage 260 using a non-hardenable fluidic material. The wiper plug 320 preferably passes through the first and fifth passages, 260 and 285, and into the chamber 305. Inside the chamber 305, the wiper plug 320 preferably forces substantially all of the hardenable fluidic material out of the chamber 305 through the sixth passage 290. The wiper plug 320 then preferably lodges in and fluidically seals off the sixth passage 290. In this manner, the chamber 305 is optimally fluidically isolated

from the chamber 315. Furthermore, the amount of hardenable sealing material within the chamber 305 is minimized.

As illustrated in FIG. 1D, a conventional sealing ball or plug 325 is then preferably injected into the first passage 260 using a non-hardenable fluidic material.

- 5 The sealing ball 325 preferably lodges in and fluidically seals off the throat 280. In this manner, the first passage 260 is fluidically isolated from the fifth fluid passage 285. Consequently, the injected non-hardenable fluidic sealing material passes from the first passage 260 into the third passage 270 and into the annular chamber 300. In this manner, the annular chamber 300 is pressurized.

- 10 As illustrated in FIG. 1E, continued injection of a non-hardenable fluidic material into the annular chamber 300 preferably increases the operating pressure within the annular chamber 300, and thereby causes the expansion cone 230 to move in the axial direction. The axial movement of the expansion cone 230 preferably radially expands the tubular member 220. The annular chamber 300 is preferably pressurized to 15 operating pressures ranging from about 1000 to 10000 psi. during the radial expansion process. The pressure differential between the first passage 260 and the fifth passage 285 is preferably maintained at least about 1000 to 10000 psi. during the radial expansion process in order to optimally fluidically seal the throat 280 using the sealing ball 325.

- 20 During the axial movement of the expansion cone 230, preferably at least a portion of the interface between the expansion cone 230 and the tubular member 220 is fluidically sealed by the sealing members 240a and 240b. During the axial movement of the expansion cone 230, preferably at least a portion of the interface between the expansion cone 230 and the second support member 215 is fluidically sealed by the 25 sealing members 245a, 245b and 245c. In this manner, the annular chamber 300 is optimally fluidically isolated from the chamber 305 during the radial expansion process.

During the radial expansion process, the volumetric size of the annular chamber 300 preferably increases while the volumetric size of the chamber 305 preferably decreases during the radial expansion process. During the radial expansion process,

preferably fluidic materials within the decreasing chamber 305 are transmitted to the chamber 310 using the fourth and fifth passages, 275 and 285. In this manner, the rate and amount of axial movement of the expansion cone 230 is optimally controlled by the flow rate of fluidic materials conveyed from the chamber 300 to the chamber 310. The 5 fourth passage 275 preferably further includes a conventional pressure compensated valve in order to optimally control the initiation of the radial expansion process. The fourth passage 275 preferably further includes a conventional pressure compensated orifice in order to optimally control the rate of the radial expansion process.

Continued radial expansion of the tubular member 220 by the expansion cone 10 230 preferably causes the sealing members 250 to contact the inside surface of the existing casing 115. In this manner, the interface between the radially expanded tubular member 220 and the preexisting casing 115 is optimally fluidically sealed. Furthermore, Continued radial expansion of the tubular member 220 by the expansion cone 230 15 preferably causes the anchor 255 to contact and at least partially penetrate the inside surface of the preexisting casing 115. In this manner, the radially expanded tubular member 220 is optimally coupled to the preexisting casing 115.

As illustrated in FIG. 1F, upon the completion of the radial expansion process using the apparatus 200 and the curing of the hardenable fluidic sealing material, a new section of wellbore casing is generated that preferably includes the radially expanded 20 tubular member 220 and an outer annular fluidic sealing member 330. In this manner, a new section of wellbore casing is generated by radially expanding a tubular member into contact with a preexisting section of wellbore casing. In several alternative preferred embodiments, the apparatus 200 is used to form or repair a wellbore casing, a pipeline, or a structural support.

25 Referring now to FIGS. 2A-2O, and 3A-3J, a preferred embodiment of an apparatus 500 for forming or repairing a wellbore casing, pipeline or structural support will be described. The apparatus 500 preferably includes a first support member 505, a debris shield 510, a second support member 515, one or more crossover valve members 520, a force multiplier outer support member 525, a force multiplier inner support

member 530, a force multiplier piston 535, a force multiplier sleeve 540, a first coupling 545, a third support member 550, a spring spacer 555, a preload spring 560, a lubrication fitting 565, a lubrication packer sleeve 570, a body of lubricant 575, a mandrel 580, an expansion cone 585, a centralizer 590, a liner hanger 595, a travel port sealing sleeve 600, a second coupling 605, a collet mandrel 610, a load transfer sleeve 615, one or more locking dogs 620, a locking dog retainer 622, a collet assembly 625, a collet retaining sleeve 635, a collet retaining adapter 640, an outer collet support member 645, a liner hanger setting sleeve 650, one or more crossover valve shear pins 655, one or more set screws 660, one or more collet retaining sleeve shear pins 665, a first passage 670, one or more second passages 675, a third passage 680, one or more crossover valve chambers 685, a primary throat passage 690, a secondary throat passage 695, a fourth passage 700, one or more inner crossover ports 705, one or more outer crossover ports 710, a force multiplier piston chamber 715, a force multiplier exhaust chamber 720, one or more force multiplier exhaust passages 725, a second 10 annular chamber 735, one or more expansion cone travel indicator ports 740, one or more collet release ports 745, a third annular chamber 750, a collet release throat passage 755, a fifth passage 760, one or more sixth passages 765, one or more seventh passages 770, one or more collet sleeve passages 775, one or more force multiplier supply passages 790, a first lubrication supply passage 795, a second lubrication supply passage 800, and a collet sleeve release chamber 805.

The first support member 505 is coupled to the debris shield 510 and the second support member 515. The first support member 505 includes the first passage 670 and the second passages 675 for conveying fluidic materials. The first support member 505 preferably has a substantially annular cross section. The first support member 505 may 25 be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The first support member 505 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength ranging from about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The first support member 505 preferably further includes a first end 1005, a second end 1010, a first threaded

portion 1015, a sealing member 1020, a second threaded portion 1025, and a collar 1035.

The first end 1005 of the first support member 505 preferably includes the first threaded portion 1015 and the first passage 670. The first threaded portion 1015 is 5 preferably adapted to be removably coupled to a conventional support member. The first threaded portion 1015 may include any number of conventional commercially available threads. The first threaded portion 1015 is preferably a 4 ½" API IF box threaded portion in order to optimally provide high tensile strength.

The second end 1010 of the first support member 505 is preferably adapted to 10 extend within both the debris shield 510 and the second support member 515. The second end 1010 of the first support member 505 preferably includes the sealing member 1020, the second threaded portion 1025, the first passage 670, and the second passages 675. The sealing member 1020 is preferably adapted to fluidically seal the interface between first support member 505 and the second support member 515. The 15 sealing member 1020 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The sealing member 1020 is preferably an O-ring sealing member available from Parker Seals in order to optimally provide a fluidic seal. The second threaded portion 1025 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the second support member 515. The second threaded portion 1025 may comprise any 20 number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The second threaded portion 1025 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength. The second end 1010 of the first support member 505 preferably includes a plurality of the passages 675 in order to optimally provide a large flow cross sectional area. The collar 1035 25 preferably extends from the second end 1010 of the first support member 505 in an outward radial direction. In this manner, the collar 1035 provides a mounting support for the debris shield 510.

The debris shield 510 is coupled to the first support member 505. The debris shield 510 preferably prevents foreign debris from entering the passage 680. In this

manner, the operation of the apparatus 200 is optimized. The debris shield 510 preferably has a substantially annular cross section. The debris shield 510 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The debris shield 510 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength ranging from about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide resistance to erosion. The debris shield 510 further preferably includes a first end 1040, a second end 1045, a channel 1050, and a sealing member 1055.

The first end 1040 of the debris shield 510 is preferably positioned above both the outer surface of the second end 1010 of the first support member 505 and the second passages 675 and below the inner surface of the second support member 515. In this manner, fluidic materials from the passages 675 flow from the passages 675 to the passage 680. Furthermore, the first end 1040 of the debris shield 510 also preferably prevents the entry of foreign materials into the passage 680.

The second end 1045 of the debris shield 510 preferably includes the channel 1050 and the sealing member 1055. The channel 1050 of the second end 1045 of the debris shield 510 is preferably adapted to mate with and couple to the collar 1035 of the second end 1010 of the first support member 505. The sealing member 1055 is preferably adapted to seal the interface between the second end 1010 of the first support member 505 and the second end 1045 of the debris shield 510. The sealing member 1055 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The sealing member 1055 is preferably an O-ring sealing member available from Parker Seals in order to optimally provide a fluidic seal.

The second support member 515 is coupled to the first support member 505, the force multiplier outer support member 525, the force multiplier inner support member 530, and the crossover valve shear pins 655. The second support member 515 is movably coupled to the crossover valve members 520. The second support member 515 preferably has a substantially annular cross section. The second support member 515 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The second support member 515 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel

having a minimum yield strength ranging from about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The second support member 515 preferably further includes a first end 1060, an intermediate portion 1065, a second end 1070, a first threaded portion 1075, a second threaded portion 1080, a third threaded portion 1085, a first sealing member 1090, a second sealing member 1095, and a third sealing member 1100.

5 The first end 1060 of the second support member 515 is preferably adapted to contain the second end 1010 of the first support member 505 and the debris shield 510. The first end 1060 of the second support member 515 preferably includes the third 10 passage 680 and the first threaded portion 1075. The first threaded portion 1075 of the first end 1060 of the second support member 515 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the second threaded portion 1025 of the second end 1010 of the first support member 505. The first threaded portion 1075 may include any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The first threaded portion 1075 is preferably 15 a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength.

The intermediate portion 1065 of the second support member 515 preferably includes the crossover valve members 520, the crossover valve shear pins 655, the crossover valve chambers 685, the primary throat passage 690, the secondary throat 20 passage 695, the fourth passage 700, the seventh passages 770, the force multiplier supply passages 790, the second threaded portion 1080, the first sealing member 1090, and the second sealing member 1095. The second threaded portion 1080 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the force multiplier outer support member 525. The second threaded portion 1080 may include any number of conventional 25 commercially available threaded portions. The second threaded portion 1080 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength. The first and second sealing members, 1090 and 1095, are preferably adapted to fluidically seal the interface between the intermediate

portion 1065 of the second support member 515 and the force multiplier outer support member 525.

The second end 1070 of the second support member 515 preferably includes the fourth passage 700, the third threaded portion 1085, and the third sealing member 1100.

- 5 The third threaded portion 1085 of the second end 1070 of the second support member 515 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the force multiplier inner support member 530. The third threaded portion 1085 may include any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The third threaded portion 1085 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to
- 10 optimally provide high tensile strength. The third sealing member 1100 is preferably adapted to fluidically seal the interface between the second end 1070 of the second support member 515 and the force multiplier inner support member 530. The third sealing member 1100 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The third sealing member 1100 is preferably an o-ring
- 15 sealing member available from Parker Seals in order to optimally provide a fluidic seal.

- Each crossover valve member 520 is coupled to corresponding crossover valve shear pins 655. Each crossover valve member 520 is also movably coupled to the second support member 515 and contained within a corresponding crossover valve chamber 685. Each crossover valve member 520 preferably has a substantially circular cross-section. The crossover valve members 520 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The crossover valve members 520 are preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength ranging from about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. Each crossover valve member 520 preferably includes a first end 1105, an intermediate portion 1110, a second end 1115, a first sealing member 1120, a second sealing member 1125, and recesses 1130.

The first end 1105 of the crossover valve member 520 preferably includes the first sealing member 1120. The outside diameter of the first end 1105 of the crossover valve member 520 is preferably less than the inside diameter of the corresponding

crossover valve chamber 685 in order to provide a sliding fit. The outside diameter of the first end 1105 of the crossover valve member 520 is preferably about 0.005 to 0.010 inches less than the inside diameter of the corresponding crossover valve chamber 685 in order to provide an optimal sliding fit. The first sealing member 1120 is preferably adapted to fluidically seal the dynamic interface between the first end 1105 of the crossover valve member 520 and the corresponding crossover valve chamber 685. The first sealing member 1120 may include any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The first sealing member 1120 is preferably an o-ring sealing member available from Parker Seals in order to optimally provide a dynamic fluidic seal.

The intermediate end 1110 of the crossover valve member 520 preferably has an outside diameter that is less than the outside diameters of the first and second ends, 1105 and 1115, of the crossover valve member 520. In this manner, fluidic materials are optimally conveyed from the corresponding inner crossover port 705 to the corresponding outer crossover ports 710 during operation of the apparatus 200.

The second end 1115 of the crossover valve member 520 preferably includes the second sealing member 1125 and the recesses 1130. The outside diameter of the second end 1115 of the crossover valve member 520 is preferably less than the inside diameter of the corresponding crossover valve chamber 685 in order to provide a sliding fit. The outside diameter of the second end 1115 of the crossover valve member 520 is preferably about 0.005 to 0.010 inches less than the inside diameter of the corresponding crossover valve chamber 685 in order to provide an optimal sliding fit. The second sealing member 1125 is preferably adapted to fluidically seal the dynamic interface between the second end 1115 of the crossover valve member 520 and the corresponding crossover valve chamber 685. The second sealing member 1125 may include any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The second sealing member 1125 is preferably an o-ring sealing member available from Parker Seals in order to optimally provide a dynamic fluidic seal. The recesses 1130 are preferably adapted to receive the corresponding crossover valve shear pins 655. In

this manner, the crossover valve member 520 is maintained in a substantially stationary position.

The force multiplier outer support member 525 is coupled to the second support member 515 and the liner hanger 595. The force multiplier outer support member 525 preferably has a substantially annular cross section. The force multiplier outer support member 525 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The force multiplier outer support member 525 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength ranging from about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The force multiplier outer support member 525 preferably further includes a first end 1135, a second end 1140, a first threaded portion 1145, and a sealing member 1150.

- The first end 1135 of the force multiplier outer support member 525 preferably includes the first threaded portion 1145 and the force multiplier piston chamber 715.
- 15 The first threaded portion 1145 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the second threaded portion 1080 of the intermediate portion 1065 of the second support member 515. The first threaded portion 1145 may include any number of conventional commercially available threads. The first threaded portion 1145 is preferably a stub acme thread in order to optimally provide high tensile strength.
- 20 The second end 1140 of the force multiplier outer support member 525 is preferably adapted to extend within at least a portion of the liner hanger 595. The second end 1140 of the force multiplier outer support member 525 preferably includes the sealing member 1150 and the force multiplier piston chamber 715. The sealing member 1150 is preferably adapted to fluidically seal the interface between the second end 1140 of the force multiplier outer support member 525 and the liner hanger 595.
- 25 The sealing member 1150 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The sealing member 1150 is preferably an o-ring with seal backups available from Parker Seals in order to optimally provide a fluidic seal.

The force multiplier inner support member 530 is coupled to the second support member 515 and the first coupling 545. The force multiplier inner support member 530 is movably coupled to the force multiplier piston 535. The force multiplier inner support member 530 preferably has a substantially annular cross-section. The force

5       multiplier inner support member 530 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The force multiplier inner support member 530 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength ranging from about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The outer surface of the force multiplier

10      inner support member 530 preferably includes a nickel plating in order to provide an optimal dynamic seal with the force multiplier piston 535. The force multiplier inner support member 530 preferably further includes a first end 1155, a second end 1160, a first threaded portion 1165, and a second threaded portion 1170.

The first end 1155 of the force multiplier inner support member 530 preferably includes the first threaded portion 1165 and the fourth passage 700. The first threaded portion 1165 of the first end 1155 of the force multiplier inner support member 530 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the third threaded portion 1085 of the second end 1070 of the second support member 515. The first threaded portion 1165 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions.

15      The first threaded portion 1165 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength.

The second end 1160 of the force multiplier inner support member 530 preferably includes the second threaded portion 1170, the fourth passage 700, and the force multiplier exhaust passages 725. The second threaded portion 1170 of the second end 1160 of the force multiplier inner support member 530 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the first coupling 545. The second threaded portion 1170 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The second threaded portion 1170 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength.

The force multiplier piston 535 is coupled to the force multiplier sleeve 540. The force multiplier piston 535 is movably coupled to the force multiplier inner support member 530. The force multiplier piston 535 preferably has a substantially annular cross-section. The force multiplier piston 535 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The force multiplier piston 535 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength ranging from about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The force multiplier piston 535 preferably further includes a first end 1175, a second end 1180, a first sealing member 1185, a first threaded portion 1190, and a second sealing member 1195.

The first end 1175 of the force multiplier piston 535 preferably includes the first sealing member 1185. The first sealing member 1185 is preferably adapted to fluidically seal the dynamic interface between the inside surface of the force multiplier piston 535 and the outside surface of the inner force multiplier support member 530. The first sealing member 1185 may include any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The first sealing member 1185 is preferably an o-ring with seal backups available from Parker Seals in order to optimally provide a dynamic seal.

The second end 1180 of the force multiplier piston 535 preferably includes the first threaded portion 1190 and the second sealing member 1195. The first threaded portion 1190 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the force multiplier sleeve 540. The first threaded portion 1190 may include any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The first threaded portion 1190 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength. The second sealing member 1195 is preferably adapted to fluidically seal the interface between the second end 1180 of the force multiplier piston 535 and the force multiplier sleeve 540. The second sealing member 1195 may include any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The second sealing member 1195 is preferably an o-ring sealing member available from Parker Seals in order to optimally provide a fluidic seal.

The force multiplier sleeve 540 is coupled to the force multiplier piston 535. The force multiplier sleeve 540 is movably coupled to the first coupling 545. The force multiplier sleeve 540 preferably has a substantially annular cross-section. The force multiplier sleeve 540 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The force multiplier sleeve 540 is fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength ranging from about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The inner surface of the force multiplier sleeve 540 preferably includes a nickel plating in order to provide an optimal dynamic seal with the outside surface of the first coupling 545. The force multiplier sleeve 540 preferably further includes a first end 1200, a second end 1205, and a first threaded portion 1210.

The first end 1200 of the force multiplier sleeve 540 preferably includes the first threaded portion 1210. The first threaded portion 1210 of the first end 1200 of the force multiplier sleeve 540 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the first threaded portion 1190 of the second end 1180 of the force multiplier piston 535. The first threaded portion 1210 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The first threaded portion 1210 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength.

The first coupling 545 is coupled to the force multiplier inner support member 530 and the third support member 550. The first coupling 545 is movably coupled to the force multiplier sleeve 540. The first coupling 545 preferably has a substantially annular cross-section. The first coupling 545 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The first coupling 545 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength ranging from about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The first coupling 545 preferably further includes the fourth passage 700, a first end 1215, a second end 1220, a first inner sealing member 1225, a first outer

sealing member 1230, a first threaded portion 1235, a second inner sealing member 1240, a second outer sealing member 1245, and a second threaded portion 1250.

- The first end 1215 of the first coupling 545 preferably includes the first inner sealing member 1225, the first outer sealing member 1230, and the first threaded portion 1235. The first inner sealing member 1225 is preferably adapted to fluidically seal the interface between the first end 1215 of the first coupling 545 and the second end 1160 of the force multiplier inner support member 530. The first inner sealing member 1225 may include any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The first inner sealing member 1225 is preferably an o-ring seal available from Parker Seals in order to optimally provide a fluidic seal. The first outer sealing member 1230 is preferably adapted to prevent foreign materials from entering the interface between the first end 1215 of the first coupling 545 and the second end 1205 of the force multiplier sleeve 540. The first outer sealing member 1230 is further preferably adapted to fluidically seal the interface between the first end 1215 of the first coupling 545 and the second end 1205 of the force multiplier sleeve 540. The first outer sealing member 1230 may include any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The first outer sealing member 1230 is preferably a seal backup available from Parker Seals in order to optimally provide a barrier to foreign materials. The first threaded portion 1235 of the first end 1215 of the first coupling 545 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the second threaded portion 1170 of the second end 1160 of the force multiplier inner support member 530. The first threaded portion 1235 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The first threaded portion 1235 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength.

The second end 1220 of the first coupling 545 preferably includes the second inner sealing member 1240, the second outer sealing member 1245, and the second threaded portion 1250. The second inner sealing member 1240 is preferably adapted to fluidically seal the interface between the second end 1220 of the first coupling 545 and

the third support member 550. The second inner sealing member 1240 may include any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The second inner sealing member 1240 is preferably an o-ring available from Parker Seals in order to optimally provide a fluidic seal. The second outer sealing member 1245 is preferably 5 adapted to fluidically seal the dynamic interface between the second end 1220 of the first coupling 545 and the second end 1205 of the force multiplier sleeve 540. The second outer sealing member 1245 may include any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The second outer sealing member 1245 is preferably an o-ring with seal backups available from Parker Seals in order to optimally provide a 10 fluidic seal. The second threaded portion 1250 of the second end 1220 of the first coupling 545 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the third support member 550. The second threaded portion 1250 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The second threaded portion 1250 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in 15 order to optimally provide high tensile strength.

The third support member 550 is coupled to the first coupling 545 and the second coupling 605. The third support member 550 is movably coupled to the spring spacer 555, the preload spring 560, the mandrel 580, and the travel port sealing sleeve 600. The third support member 550 preferably has a substantially annular cross-section. The third support member 550 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The third support member 550 is 20 preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength ranging from about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The outer surface of the third support member 550 preferably includes a nickel plating in order to provide an optimal dynamic seal with the inside surfaces of the mandrel 580 and the travel port sealing sleeve 600. The third support member 550 preferably further includes a first end 1255, a second end 1260, a 25 first threaded portion 1265, and a second threaded portion 1270.

The first end 1255 of the third support member 550 preferably includes the first threaded portion 1265 and the fourth passage 700. The first threaded portion 1265 of the first end 1255 of the third support member 550 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the second threaded portion 1250 of the second end 1220 of the 5 first coupling 545. The first threaded portion 1265 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The first threaded portion 1265 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength.

The second end 1260 of the third support member 550 preferably includes the 10 second threaded portion 1270 and the fourth passage 700, and the expansion cone travel indicator ports 740. The second threaded portion 1270 of the second end 1260 of the third support member 550 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the second coupling 605. The second threaded portion 1270 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The second threaded portion 15 1270 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength.

The spring spacer 555 is coupled to the preload spring 560. The spring spacer is movably coupled to the third support member 550. The spring spacer 555 preferably has a substantially annular cross-section. The spring spacer 555 may be fabricated 20 from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The spring spacer 555 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength ranging from about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion.

The preload spring 560 is coupled to the spring spacer 555. The preload spring 25 560 is movably coupled to the third support member 550. The preload spring 560 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The preload spring 560 is preferably fabricated from alloys of chromium-vanadium or chromium-silicon in order to optimally provide a high preload force for sealing the interface between the expansion cone 585 and the liner hanger 595. The preload spring

560 preferably has a spring rate ranging from about 500 to 2000 lbf/in in order to optimally provide a preload force.

The lubrication fitting 565 is coupled to the lubrication packer sleeve 570, the body of lubricant 575 and the mandrel 580. The lubrication fitting 565 preferably has a substantially annular cross-section. The lubrication fitting 565 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The lubrication fitting 565 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength ranging from about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The lubrication fitting 565 preferably includes a first end 1275, a second end 1280, a lubrication injection fitting 1285, a first threaded portion 1290, and the first lubrication supply passage 795.

The first end 1275 of the lubrication fitting 565 preferably includes the lubrication injection fitting 1285, the first threaded portion 1290 and the first lubrication supply passage 795. The lubrication injection fitting 1285 is preferably adapted to permit lubricants to be injected into the first lubrication supply passage 795. The lubrication injection fitting 1285 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available injection fittings. The lubrication injection fitting 1285 is preferably a model 1641-B grease fitting available from Alemite Corp. in order to optimally provide a connection for injecting lubricants. The first threaded portion 1290 of the first end 1275 of the lubrication fitting 565 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the mandrel 580. The first threaded portion 1290 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The first threaded portion 1290 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services. The second end 1280 of the lubrication fitting 565 is preferably spaced above the outside surface of the mandrel 580 in order to define a portion of the first lubrication supply passage 795.

The lubrication packer sleeve 570 is coupled to the lubrication fitting 565 and the body of lubricant 575. The lubrication packer sleeve 570 is movably coupled to the liner hanger 595. The lubrication packer sleeve 570 is preferably adapted to fluidically

seal the radial gap between the outside surface of the second end 1280 of the lubrication fitting 565 and the inside surface of the liner hanger 595. The lubrication packer sleeve 570 is further preferably adapted to compress the body of lubricant 575. In this manner, the lubricants within the body of lubricant 575 are optimally pumped to outer surface of the expansion cone 585.

The lubrication packer sleeve 570 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available packer sleeves. The lubrication packer sleeve 570 is preferably a 70 durometer packer available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide a low pressure fluidic seal.

10       The body of lubricant 575 is fluidically coupled to the first lubrication supply passage 795 and the second lubrication supply passage 800. The body of lubricant 575 is movably coupled to the lubrication fitting 565, the lubrication packer sleeve 570, the mandrel 580, the expansion cone 585 and the liner hanger 595. The body of lubricant 575 preferably provides a supply of lubricant for lubricating the dynamic interface 15 between the outside surface of the expansion cone 585 and the inside surface of the liner hanger 595. The body of lubricant 575 may include any number of conventional commercially available lubricants. The body of lubricant 575 preferably includes anti-seize 1500 available from Climax Lubricants and Equipment Co. in order to optimally provide high pressure lubrication.

20       During operation of the apparatus 500, preferably the body of lubricant 575 lubricates the interface between the interior surface of the expanded portion of the liner hanger 595 and the exterior surface of the expansion cone 585. In this manner, when the expansion cone 585 is removed from the interior of the radially expanded liner hanger 595, the body of lubricant 575 lubricates the dynamic interfaces between the 25 interior surface of the expanded portion of the liner hanger 595 and the exterior surface of the expansion cone 585. Thus, the body of lubricant 575 optimally reduces the force required to remove the expansion cone 585 from the radially expanded liner hanger 595.

The mandrel 580 is coupled to the lubrication fitting 565, the expansion cone 585, and the centralizer 590. The mandrel 580 is movably coupled to the third support member 550, the body of lubricant 575, and the liner hanger 595. The mandrel 580 preferably has a substantially annular cross-section. The mandrel 580 may be

5      fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The mandrel 580 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength ranging from about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The mandrel 580 preferably further includes a first end 1295, an intermediate portion 1300, second end 1305, a first

10     threaded portion 1310, a first sealing member 1315, a second sealing member 1320, and a second threaded portion 1325, a first wear ring 1326, and a second wear ring 1327.

The first end 1295 of the mandrel 580 preferably includes the first threaded portion 1310, the first sealing member 1315, and the first wear ring 1326. The first

15     threaded portion 1310 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the first threaded portion 1290 of the first end 1275 of the lubrication fitting 565. The first threaded portion 1310 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The first threaded portion 1310 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high

20     tensile strength. The first sealing member 1315 is preferably adapted to fluidically seal the dynamic interface between the inside surface of the first end 1295 of the mandrel 580 and the outside surface of the third support member 550. The first sealing member 1315 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The first sealing member 1315 is preferably an o-ring with seal backups

25     available from Parker Seals in order to optimally provide a dynamic fluidic seal. The first wear ring 1326 is preferably positioned within an interior groove formed in the first end 1295 of the mandrel 580. The first wear ring 1326 is preferably adapted to maintain concentricity between and among the mandrel 580 and the third support member 550 during axial displacement of the mandrel 580, reduce frictional forces, and

support side loads. The first wear ring 1326 is preferably a model GR2C wear ring available from Busak & Shamban.

The outside diameter of the intermediate portion 1300 of the mandrel 580 is preferably about 0.05 to 0.25 inches less than the inside diameter of the line hanger

- 5 595. In this manner, the second lubrication supply passage 800 is defined by the radial gap between the intermediate portion 1300 of the mandrel 580 and the liner hanger 595.

The second end 1305 of the mandrel 580 preferably includes the second sealing member 1320, the second threaded portion 1325, and the second wear ring 1327. The second sealing member 1320 is preferably adapted to fluidically seal the interface

- 10 between the inside surface of the expansion cone 585 and the outside surface of the mandrel 580. The second sealing member 1320 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The second sealing member 1320 is preferably an o-ring sealing member available from Parker Seals in order to optimally provide a fluidic seal. The second threaded portion 1325 is preferably

- 15 adapted to be removably coupled to the centralizer 590. The second threaded portion 1325 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The second threaded portion 1325 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength.

- 20 The second wear ring 1327 is preferably positioned within an interior groove formed in the second end 1305 of the mandrel 580. The second wear ring 1327 is preferably adapted to maintain concentricity between and among the mandrel 580 and the third support member 550 during axial displacement of the mandrel 580, reduce frictional forces, and support side loads. The second wear ring 1327 is preferably a model GR2C wear ring available from Busak & Shamban.

- 25 The expansion cone 585 is coupled to the mandrel 580 and the centralizer 590. The expansion cone 585 is fluidically coupled to the second lubrication supply passage 800. The expansion cone 585 is movably coupled to the body of lubricant 575 and the liner hanger 595. The expansion cone 585 preferably includes a substantially annular cross-section. The expansion cone 585 may be fabricated from any number of

conventional commercially available materials. The expansion cone 585 is preferably fabricated from cold worked tool steel in order to optimally provide high strength and wear resistance.

- The expansion cone 585 is preferably further provided substantially as described
- 5 in one or more of the following: (1) U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/440,338, attorney docket number 25791.9.02, filed on 11/15/1999 now United States Patent 6,328,113, which claimed benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/108,558, attorney docket number 25791.9, filed on 11/16/1998, (2) U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/454,139, attorney docket number
- 10 25791.3.02, filed on 12/31/1999 now United States Patent 6,497,289, which claimed benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/111,293, filed on 12/7/1998, (3) U.S. Patent Application Serial Number 09/502,350, attorney docket number 25791.8.02, filed on 2/10/2000, which claimed the benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/119,611,
- 15 attorney docket number 25791.8, filed 2/11/1999, (4) U.S. Patent Application Serial Number 09/510,913, attorney docket number 25791.7.02, filed on 2/23/2000, which claimed the benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/121,702, attorney docket number 25791.7, filed on 2/25/1999, (5) U.S. Patent Application Serial Number 09/511,941, attorney docket number 25791.16.02,
- 20 filed on 2/24/2000 now United States Patent 6,575,240, which claimed the benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application number 60/121,907, attorney docket number 25791.16, filed 2/26/1999, (6) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/124,042, attorney docket number 25791.11, filed on 3/11/1999, (7) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/131,106, attorney docket number
- 25 25791.23, filed on 4/26/1999, (8) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/137,998, attorney docket number 25791.17, filed on 6/7/1999, (9) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/143,039, attorney docket number 25791.26, filed on 7/9/1999, and (10) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/146,203,

attorney docket number 25791.25, filed on 7/29/1999, the disclosures of which are incorporated by reference.

The centralizer 590 is coupled to the mandrel 580 and the expansion cone 585. The centralizer 590 is movably coupled to the liner hanger 595. The centralizer 590 preferably includes a substantially annular cross-section. The centralizer 590 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The centralizer 590 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength ranging from about 75,000 to 140,000 in order to optimally provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The centralizer 590 preferably includes a first end 1330, a second end 1335, a plurality of centralizer fins 1340, and a threaded portion 1345.

The second end 1335 of the centralizer 590 preferably includes the centralizer fins 1340 and the threaded portion 1345. The centralizer fins 1340 preferably extend from the second end 1335 of the centralizer 590 in a substantially radial direction. The radial gap between the centralizer fins 1340 and the inside surface of the liner hanger 595 is preferably less than about 0.06 inches in order to optimally provide centralization of the expansion cone 585. The threaded portion 1345 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the second threaded portion 1325 of the second end 1305 of the mandrel 580. The threaded portion 1345 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The threaded portion 1345 is preferably a stub acme thread in order to optimally provide high tensile strength.

The liner hanger 595 is coupled to the outer collet support member 645 and the set screws 660. The liner hanger 595 is movably coupled to the lubrication packer sleeve 570, the body of lubricant 575, the expansion cone 585, and the centralizer 590. The liner hanger 595 preferably has a substantially annular cross-section. The liner hanger 595 preferably includes a plurality of tubular members coupled end to end. The axial length of the liner hanger 595 preferably ranges from about 5 to 12 feet. The liner hanger 595 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The liner hanger 595 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a

minimum yield strength ranging from about 40,000 to 125,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and ductility. The liner hanger 595 preferably includes a first end 1350, an intermediate portion 1355, a second end 1360, a sealing member 1365, a threaded portion 1370, one or more set screw mounting holes 1375, and one or more outside sealing portions 1380.

The outside diameter of the first end 1350 of the liner hanger 595 is preferably selected to permit the liner hanger 595 and apparatus 500 to be inserted into another opening or tubular member. The outside diameter of the first end 1350 of the liner hanger 595 is preferably selected to be about 0.12 to 2 inches less than the inside diameter of the opening or tubular member that the liner hanger 595 will be inserted into. The axial length of the first end 1350 of the liner hanger 595 preferably ranges from about 8 to 20 inches.

The outside diameter of the intermediate portion 1355 of the liner hanger 595 preferably provides a transition from the first end 1350 to the second end 1360 of the liner hanger. The axial length of the intermediate portion 1355 of the liner hanger 595 preferably ranges from about 0.25 to 2 inches in order to optimally provide reduced radial expansion pressures.

The second end 1360 of the liner hanger 595 includes the sealing member 1365, the threaded portion 1370, the set screw mounting holes 1375 and the outside sealing portions 1380. The outside diameter of the second end 1360 of the liner hanger 595 is preferably about 0.10 to 2.00 inches less than the outside diameter of the first end 1350 of the liner hanger 595 in order to optimally provide reduced radial expansion pressures. The sealing member 1365 is preferably adapted to fluidically seal the interface between the second end 1360 of the liner hanger and the outer collet support member 645. The sealing member 1365 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The sealing member 1365 is preferably an o-ring seal available from Parker Seals in order to optimally provide a fluidic seal. The threaded portion 1370 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the outer collet support member 645. The threaded portion 1370 may comprise any number of

conventional commercially available threaded portions. The threaded portion 1370 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength. The set screw mounting holes 1375 are preferably adapted to receive the set screws 660. Each outside sealing portion 1380

5 preferably includes a top ring 1385, an intermediate sealing member 1395, and a lower ring 1390. The top and bottom rings, 1385 and 1390, are preferably adapted to penetrate the inside surface of a wellbore casing. The top and bottom rings, 1385 and 1390, preferably extend from the outside surface of the second end 1360 of the liner hanger 595. The outside diameter of the top and bottom rings, 1385 and 1390,

10 preferably are less than or equal to the outside diameter of the first end 1350 of the liner hanger 595 in order to optimally provide protection from abrasion when placing the apparatus 500 within a wellbore casing or other tubular member. The top and bottom rings, 1385 and 1390 are preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength of about 40,000 to 125,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and ductility.

15 The top and bottom rings, 1385 and 1390, are preferably integrally formed with the liner hanger 595. The intermediate sealing member 1395 is preferably adapted to seal the interface between the outside surface of the second end 1360 of the liner hanger 595 and the inside surface of a wellbore casing. The intermediate sealing member 1395 may comprise any number of conventional sealing members. The

20 intermediate sealing member 1395 is preferably a 50 to 90 durometer nitrile elastomeric sealing member available from Eutsler Technical Products in order to optimally provide a fluidic seal and shear strength.

The liner hanger 595 is further preferably provided substantially as described in one or more of the following: (1) U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/440,338, attorney docket number 25791.9.02, filed on 11/15/1999 now United States Patent 6,328,113, which claimed benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/108,558, attorney docket number 25791.9, filed on 11/16/1998, (2) U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/454,139, attorney docket number 25791.3.02, filed on 12/31/1999 now United States Patent 6,497,289, which claimed

benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/111,293, filed on 12/7/1998, (3) U.S. Patent Application Serial Number 09/502,350, attorney docket number 25791.8.02, filed on 2/10/2000, which claimed the benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/119,611,

5 attorney docket number 25791.8, filed 2/11/1999, (4) U.S. Patent Application Serial Number 09/510,913, attorney docket number 25791.7.02, filed on 2/23/2000, which claimed the benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/121,702, attorney docket number 25791.7, filed on 2/25/1999, (5) U.S.

10 Patent Application Serial Number 09/511,941, attorney docket number 25791.16.02, filed on 2/24/2000 now United States Patent 6,575,240, which claimed the benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application number 60/121,907, attorney docket number 25791.16, filed 2/26/1999, (6) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/124,042, attorney docket number 25791.11, filed on 3/11/1999, (7)

15 U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/131,106, attorney docket number 25791.23, filed on 4/26/1999, (8) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/137,998, attorney docket number 25791.17, filed on 6/7/1999, (9) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/143,039, attorney docket number 25791.26, filed on 7/9/1999, and (10) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/146,203,

20 attorney docket number 25791.25, filed on 7/29/1999, the disclosures of which are incorporated by reference.

The travel port sealing sleeve 600 is movably coupled to the third support member 550. The travel port sealing sleeve 600 is further initially positioned over the expansion cone travel indicator ports 740. The travel port sealing sleeve 600 preferably has a substantially annular cross-section. The travel port sealing sleeve 600 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The travel port sealing sleeve 600 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength of about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The travel port sealing sleeve preferably includes a plurality of inner sealing members 1400. The inner sealing

members 1400 are preferably adapted to seal the dynamic interface between the inside surface of the travel port sealing sleeve 600 and the outside surface of the third support member 550. The inner sealing members 1400 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The inner sealing members 5 1400 are preferably o-rings available from Parker Seals in order to optimally provide a fluidic seal. The inner sealing members 1400 preferably further provide sufficient frictional force to prevent inadvertent movement of the travel port sealing sleeve 600. The travel port sealing sleeve 600 is preferably removably coupled to the third support member 550 by one or more shear pins. In this manner, accidental movement of the 10 travel port sealing sleeve 600 is prevented.

The second coupling 605 is coupled to the third support member 550 and the collet mandrel 610. The second coupling 605 preferably has a substantially annular cross-section. The second coupling 605 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The second coupling 605 is preferably 15 fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength of about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The second coupling 605 preferably further includes the fourth passage 700, a first end 1405, a second end 1410, a first inner sealing member 1415, a first threaded portion 1420, a second inner sealing member 1425, and a second threaded portion 20 1430.

The first end 1405 of the second coupling 605 preferably includes the first inner sealing member 1415 and the first threaded portion 1420. The first inner sealing member 1415 is preferably adapted to fluidically seal the interface between the first end 1405 of the second coupling 605 and the second end 1260 of the third support member 25 550. The first inner sealing member 1415 may include any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The first inner sealing member 1415 is preferably an o-ring available from Parker Seals in order to optimally provide a fluidic seal. The first threaded portion 1420 of the first end 1415 of the second coupling 605 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the second threaded portion 1270 of the

second end 1260 of the third support member 550. The first threaded portion 1420 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The first threaded portion 1420 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength.

- 5        The second end 1410 of the second coupling 605 preferably includes the second inner sealing member 1425 and the second threaded portion 1430. The second inner sealing member 1425 is preferably adapted to fluidically seal the interface between the second end 1410 of the second coupling 605 and the collet mandrel 610. The second inner sealing member 1425 may include any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The second inner sealing member 1425 is preferably an o-ring available from Parker Seals in order to optimally provide a fluidic seal. The second threaded portion 1430 of the second end 1410 of the second coupling 605 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the collet mandrel 610. The second threaded portion 1430 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The second threaded portion 1430 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength.
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- 20        The collet mandrel 610 is coupled to the second coupling 605, the collet retaining adapter 640, and the collet retaining sleeve shear pins 665. The collet mandrel 610 is releasably coupled to the locking dogs 620, the collet assembly 625, and the collet retaining sleeve 635. The collet mandrel 610 preferably has a substantially annular cross-section. The collet mandrel 610 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The collet mandrel 610 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength of about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The collet mandrel 610 preferably further includes the fourth passage 700, the collet release ports 745, the collet release throat passage 755, the fifth passage 760, a first end 1435, a second end 1440, a first shoulder 1445, a second shoulder 1450, a
- 25

recess 1455, a shear pin mounting hole 1460, a first threaded portion 1465, a second threaded portion 1470, and a sealing member 1475.

- The first end 1435 of the collet mandrel 610 preferably includes the fourth passage 700, the first shoulder 1445, and the first threaded portion 1465. The first threaded portion 1465 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the second threaded portion 1430 of the second end 1410 of the second coupling 605. The first threaded portion 1465 may include any number of conventional threaded portions. The first threaded portion 1465 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength.
- 10 The second end 1440 of the collet mandrel 610 preferably includes the fourth passage 700, the collet release ports 745, the collet release throat passage 755, the fifth passage 760, the second shoulder 1450, the recess 1455, the shear pin mounting hole 1460, the second threaded portion 1470, and the sealing member 1475. The second shoulder 1450 is preferably adapted to mate with and provide a reference position for 15 the collet retaining sleeve 635. The recess 1455 is preferably adapted to define a portion of the collet sleeve release chamber 805. The shear pin mounting hole 1460 is preferably adapted to receive the collet retaining sleeve shear pins 665. The second threaded portion 1470 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the collet retaining adapter 640. The second threaded portion 1470 may include any number of 20 conventional commercially available threaded portions. The second threaded portions 1470 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength. The sealing member 1475 is preferably adapted to seal the dynamic interface between the outside surface of the collet mandrel 610 and the inside surface of the collet retaining sleeve 635. The sealing 25 member 1475 may include any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The sealing member 1475 is preferably an o-ring available from Parker Seals in order to optimally provide a fluidic seal.

The load transfer sleeve 615 is movably coupled to the collet mandrel 610, the collet assembly 625, and the outer collet support member 645. The load transfer sleeve

615 preferably has a substantially annular cross-section. The load transfer sleeve 615 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The load transfer sleeve 615 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength of about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high  
5 strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The load transfer sleeve 615 preferably further a first end 1480 and a second end 1485.

The inside diameter of the first end 1480 of the load transfer sleeve 615 is preferably greater than the outside diameter of the collet mandrel 610 and less than the outside diameters of the second coupling 605 and the locking dog retainer 622. In this  
10 manner, during operation of the apparatus 500, the load transfer sleeve 615 optimally permits the flow of fluidic materials from the second annular chamber 735 to the third annular chamber 750. Furthermore, in this manner, during operation of the apparatus 200, the load transfer sleeve 615 optimally limits downward movement of the second coupling 605 relative to the collet assembly 625.

15 The second end 1485 of the load transfer sleeve 615 is preferably adapted to cooperatively interact with the collet 625. In this manner, during operation of the apparatus 200, the load transfer sleeve 615 optimally limits downward movement of the second coupling 605 relative to the collet assembly 625.

20 The locking dogs 620 are coupled to the locking dog retainer 622 and the collet assembly 625. The locking dogs 620 are releasably coupled to the collet mandrel 610. The locking dogs 620 are preferably adapted to lock onto the outside surface of the collet mandrel 610 when the collet mandrel 610 is displaced in the downward direction relative to the locking dogs 620. The locking dogs 620 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available locking dogs. The locking dogs 620 preferably  
25 include a plurality of locking dog elements 1490 and a plurality of locking dog springs 1495.

Each of the locking dog elements 1490 preferably include an arcuate segment including a pair of external grooves for receiving the locking dog springs 1495. Each of the locking dog springs 1495 are preferably garter springs. During operation of the

apparatus 500, the locking dog elements 1490 are preferably radially inwardly displaced by the locking dog springs 1495 when the locking dogs 620 are relatively axially displaced past the first shoulder 1445 of the collet mandrel 610. As a result, the locking dogs 620 are then engaged by the first shoulder 1445 of the collet mandrel 610.

5       The locking dog retainer 622 is coupled to the locking dogs 620 and the collet assembly 625. The locking dog retainer 622 preferably has a substantially annular cross-section. The locking dog retainer 622 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The locking dog retainer 622 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength of about 75,000  
10      to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The locking dog retainer 622 preferably further includes a first end 1500, a second end 1505, and a threaded portion 1510.

15      The first end 1500 of the locking dog retainer 622 is preferably adapted to capture the locking dogs 620. In this manner, when the locking dogs 620 latch onto the first shoulder 1445 of the collet mandrel 610, the locking dog retainer 622 transmits the axial force to the collet assembly 625.

20      The second end 1505 of the locking dog retainer preferably includes the threaded portion 1510. The threaded portion 1510 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the collet assembly 625. The threaded portion 1510 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The threaded portions 1510 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength.

25      The collet assembly 625 is coupled to the locking dogs 620 and the locking dog retainer 622. The collet assembly 625 is releasably coupled to the collet mandrel 610, the outer collet support member 645, the collet retaining sleeve 635, the load transfer sleeve 615, and the collet retaining adapter 640.

The collet assembly 625 preferably has a substantially annular cross-section. The collet assembly 625 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The collet assembly 625 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel

having a minimum yield strength of about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The collet assembly 625 preferably includes a collet body 1515, a plurality of collet arms 1520, a plurality of collet upsets 1525, flow passages 1530, and a threaded portion 1535.

- 5        The collet body 1515 preferably includes the flow passages 1530 and the threaded portion 1535. The flow passages 1530 are preferably adapted to convey fluidic materials between the second annular chamber 735 and the third annular chamber 750. The threaded portion 1535 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the threaded portion 1510 of the second end 1505 of the locking dog retainer 10 622. The threaded portion 1535 may include any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The threaded portion 1535 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength.

- 15      The collet arms 1520 extend from the collet body 1515 in a substantially axial direction. The collet upsets 1525 extend from the ends of corresponding collet arms 1520 in a substantially radial direction. The collet upsets 1525 are preferably adapted to mate with and cooperatively interact with corresponding slots provided in the collet retaining adapter 640 and the liner hanger setting sleeve 650. In this manner, the collet upsets 1525 preferably controllably couple the collet retaining adapter 640 to the outer 20 collet support member 645 and the liner hanger setting sleeve 650. In this manner, axial and radial forces are optimally coupled between the collet retaining adapter 640, the outer collet support member 645 and the liner hanger setting sleeve 650. The collet upsets 1525 preferably include a flat outer surface 1540 and an angled outer surface 1545. In this manner, the collet upsets 1525 are optimally adapted to be removably 25 coupled to the slots provided in the collet retaining adapter 640 and the liner hanger setting sleeve 650.

The collet retaining sleeve 635 is coupled to the collet retaining sleeve shear pins 665. The collet retaining sleeve 635 is movably coupled to the collet mandrel 610 and the collet assembly 625. The collet retaining sleeve 635 preferably has a

substantially annular cross-section. The collet retaining sleeve 635 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The collet retaining sleeve 635 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength of about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and 5 resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The collet retaining sleeve 635 preferably includes the collet sleeve passages 775, a first end 1550, a second end 1555, one or more shear pin mounting holes 1560, a first shoulder 1570, a second shoulder 1575, and a sealing member 1580.

The first end 1550 of the collet retaining sleeve 635 preferably includes the 10 collet sleeve passages 775, the shear pin mounting holes 1560, and the first shoulder 1570. The collet sleeve passages 775 are preferably adapted to convey fluidic materials between the second annular chamber 735 and the third annular chamber 750. The shear pin mounting holes 1560 are preferable adapted to receive corresponding shear pins 665. The first shoulder 1570 is preferably adapted to mate with the second shoulder 15 1450 of the collet mandrel 610.

The second end 1555 of the collet retaining sleeve 635 preferably includes the collet sleeve passages 775, the second shoulder 1575, and the sealing member 1580. The collet sleeve passages 775 are preferably adapted to convey fluidic materials between the second annular chamber 735 and the third annular chamber 750. The 20 second shoulder 1575 of the second end 1555 of the collet retaining sleeve 635 and the recess 1455 of the second end 1440 of the collet mandrel 610 are preferably adapted to define the collet sleeve release chamber 805. The sealing member 1580 is preferably adapted to seal the dynamic interface between the outer surface of the collet mandrel 610 and the inside surface of the collet retaining sleeve 635. The sealing member 1580 25 may include any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The sealing member 1580 is preferably an o-ring available from Parker Seals in order to optimally provide a fluidic seal.

The collet retaining adapter 640 is coupled to the collet mandrel 610. The collet retaining adapter 640 is movably coupled to the liner hanger setting sleeve 650, the

collet retaining sleeve 635, and the collet assembly 625. The collet retaining adapter 640 preferably has a substantially annular cross-section. The collet retaining adapter 640 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The collet retaining adapter 640 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel

5 having a minimum yield strength of about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The collet retaining adapter 640 preferably includes the fifth passage 760, the sixth passages 765, a first end 1585, an intermediate portion 1590, a second end 1595, a plurality of collet slots 1600, a sealing member 1605, a first threaded portion 1610, and a second threaded portion

10 1615.

The first end 1585 of the collet retaining adapter 640 preferably includes the collet slots 1600. The collet slots 1600 are preferably adapted to cooperatively interact with and mate with the collet upsets 1525. The collet slots 1600 are further preferably adapted to be substantially aligned with corresponding collet slots provided in the liner hanger setting sleeve 650. In this manner, the slots provided in the collet retaining adapter 640 and the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 are removably coupled to the collet upsets 1525.

The intermediate portion 1590 of the collet retaining adapter 640 preferably includes the sixth passages 765, the sealing member 1605, and the first threaded portion 1610. The sealing member 1605 is preferably adapted to fluidically seal the interface between the outside surface of the collet retaining adapter 640 and the inside surface of the liner hanger setting sleeve 650. The sealing member 1605 may include any number of conventional commercially available sealing members. The sealing member 1605 is preferably an o-ring available from Parker Seals in order to optimally provide a fluidic seal. The first threaded portion 1610 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the second threaded portion 1470 of the second end 1440 of the collet mandrel 610. The first threaded portion 1610 may include any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The first threaded portion 1610 is preferably a stub acme

thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength.

- The second end 1595 of the collet retaining adapter 640 preferably includes the fifth passage 760 and the second threaded portion 1615. The second threaded portion 1615 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to a conventional SSR plug set, or other similar device.

- The outer collet support member 645 is coupled to the liner hanger 595, the set screws 660, and the liner hanger setting sleeve 650. The outer collet support member 645 is releasably coupled to the collet assembly 625. The outer collet support member 645 is movably coupled to the load transfer sleeve 615. The outer collet support member 645 preferably has a substantially annular cross-section. The outer collet support member 645 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The outer collet support member 645 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength of about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The outer collet support member 645 preferably includes a first end 1620, a second end 1625, a first threaded portion 1630, set screw mounting holes 1635, a recess 1640, and a second threaded portion 1645.

- The first end 1620 of the outer collet support member 645 preferably includes the first threaded portion 1630 and the set screw mounting holes 1635. The first threaded portion 1630 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the threaded portion 1370 of the second end 1360 of the liner hanger 595. The first threaded portion 1630 may include any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The first threaded portion 1630 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength. The set screw mounting holes 1635 are preferably adapted to receive corresponding set screws 660.

The second end 1625 of the outer collet support member 645 preferably includes the recess 1640 and the second threaded portion 1645. The recess 1640 is preferably

adapted to receive a portion of the end of the liner hanger setting sleeve 650. In this manner, the second end 1625 of the outer collet support member 645 overlaps with a portion of the end of the liner hanger setting sleeve 650. The second threaded portion 1645 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the liner hanger setting sleeve 650. The second threaded portion 1645 may include any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The second threaded portion 1645 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength.

The liner hanger setting sleeve 650 is coupled to the outer collet support member 645. The liner hanger setting sleeve 650 is releasably coupled to the collet assembly 625. The liner hanger setting sleeve 650 is movably coupled to the collet retaining adapter 640. The liner hanger setting sleeve 650 preferably has a substantially annular cross-section. The liner hanger setting sleeve 650 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The liner hanger setting sleeve 650 is preferably fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength of about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The liner hanger setting sleeve 650 preferably includes a first end 1650, a second end 1655, a recessed portion 1660, a plurality of collet slots 1665, a threaded portion 1670, an interior shoulder 1672, and a threaded portion 1673.

The first end 1650 of the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 preferably includes the recessed portion 1660, the plurality of collet slots 1665 and the threaded portion 1670. The recessed portion 1660 of the first end 1650 of the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 is preferably adapted to mate with the recessed portion 1640 of the second end 1625 of the outer collet support member 645. In this manner, the first end 1650 of the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 overlaps and mates with the second end 1625 of the outer collet support member 645. The recessed portion 1660 of the first end 1650 of the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 further includes the plurality of collet slots 1665. The collet slots 1665 are preferably adapted to mate with and cooperatively interact with the collet upsets 1525. The collet slots 1665 are further preferably adapted to be aligned with the

collet slots 1600 of the collet retaining adapted 640. In this manner, the collet retaining adapter 640 and the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 preferably cooperatively interact with and mate with the collet upsets 1525. The threaded portion 1670 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the second threaded portion 1645 of the second end

- 5 1625 of the outer collet support member 645. The threaded portion 1670 may include any number of conventional threaded portions. The threaded portion 1670 is preferably a stub acme thread available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide high tensile strength.

The second end 1655 of the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 preferably includes  
10. the interior shoulder 1672 and the threaded portion 1673. The threaded portion 1673 is preferably adapted to be coupled to conventional tubular members. In this manner tubular members are hung from the second end 1655 of the liner hanger setting sleeve 650. The threaded portion 1673 may be any number of conventional commercially available threaded portions. The threaded portion 1673 is preferably a stub acme thread  
15 available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to provide high tensile strength.

The crossover valve shear pins 655 are coupled to the second support member 515. The crossover valve shear pins 655 are releasably coupled to corresponding ones of the crossover valve members 520. The crossover valve shear pins 655 may include any number of conventional commercially available shear pins. The crossover valve  
20 shear pins 655 are preferably ASTM B16 Brass H02 condition shear pins available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide consistency.

The set screws 660 coupled to the liner hanger 595 and the outer collet support member 645. The set screws 660 may include any number of conventional commercially available set screws.

25 The collet retaining sleeve shear pins 665 are coupled to the collet mandrel 610. The collet retaining shear pins 665 are releasably coupled to the collet retaining sleeve 635. The collet retaining sleeve shear pins 665 may include any number of conventional commercially available shear pins. The collet retaining sleeve shear pins

665 are preferably ASTM B16 Brass H02 condition shear pins available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide consistent shear force values.

- The first passage 670 is fluidically coupled to the second passages 675 and the secondary throat passage 695. The first passage 670 is preferably defined by the
- 5 interior of the first support member 505. The first passage 670 is preferably adapted to convey fluidic materials such as, for example, drilling mud, cement, and/or lubricants. The first passage 670 is adapted to convey fluidic materials at operating pressures and flow rates ranging from about 0 to 10,000 psi and 0 to 650 gallons/minute.

The second passages 675 are fluidically coupled to the first passage 670, the third passage 680, and the crossover valve chambers 685. The second passages 675 are preferably defined by a plurality of radial openings provided in the second end 1010 of the first support member 505. The second passages 675 are preferably adapted to convey fluidic materials such as, for example, drilling mud, cement and/or lubricants. The second passages 675 are preferably adapted to convey fluidic materials at operating pressures and flow rates ranging from about 0 to 10,000 psi and 0 to 650 gallons/minute.

The third passage 680 is fluidically coupled to the second passages 675 and the force multiplier supply passages 790. The third passage 680 is preferably defined by the radial gap between the second end 1010 of the first support member 505 and the

20 first end 1060 of the second support member 515. The third passage 680 is preferably adapted to convey fluidic materials such as, for example, drilling mud, cement, and/or lubricants. The third passage 680 is preferably adapted to convey fluidic materials at operating pressures and flow rates ranging from about 0 to 10,000 psi and 0 to 200 gallons/minute.

25 The crossover valve chambers 685 are fluidically coupled to the third passage 680, the corresponding inner crossover ports 705, the corresponding outer crossover ports 710, and the corresponding seventh passages 770. The crossover valve chambers 685 are preferably defined by axial passages provided in the second support member 515. The crossover valve chambers 685 are movably coupled to corresponding

crossover valve members 520. The crossover valve chambers 685 preferably have a substantially constant circular cross-section.

During operation of the apparatus 500 preferably one end of one or more of the crossover valve chambers 685 is pressurized by fluidic materials injected into the third passage 680. In this manner, the crossover valve shear pins 655 are sheared and the crossover valve members 520 are displaced. The displacement of the crossover valve members 520 causes the corresponding inner and outer crossover ports, 705 and 710, to be fluidically coupled. The crossover valve chambers 685 are preferably pressurized by closing the primary and/or the secondary throat passages, 690 and 695, using conventional plugs or balls, and then injecting fluidic materials into the first, second and third passages 670, 675 and 680.

The primary throat passage 690 is fluidically coupled to the secondary throat passage 695 and the fourth passage 700. The primary throat passage 690 is preferably defined by a transitional section of the interior of the second support member 515 in which the inside diameter transitions from a first inside diameter to a second, and smaller, inside diameter. The primary throat passage 690 is preferably adapted to receive and mate with a conventional ball or plug. In this manner, the first passage 670 optimally fluidically isolated from the fourth passage 700.

The secondary throat passage 695 is fluidically coupled to the first passage 670 and the primary throat passage 690. The secondary throat passage 695 is preferably defined by another transitional section of the interior of the second support member 515 in which the inside diameter transitions from a first inside diameter to a second, and smaller, inside diameter. The secondary throat passage 695 is preferably adapted to receive and mate with a conventional ball or plug. In this manner, the first passage 670 optimally fluidically isolated from the fourth passage 700.

The inside diameter of the primary throat passage 690 is preferably less than or equal to the inside diameter of the secondary throat passage 695. In this manner, if required, a primary plug or ball can be placed in the primary throat passage 690, and then a larger secondary plug or ball can be placed in the secondary throat passage 695.

In this manner, the first passage 670 is optimally fluidically isolated from the fourth passage 700.

The fourth passage 700 is fluidically coupled to the primary throat passage 690, the seventh passage 770, the force multiplier exhaust passages 725, the collet release ports 745, and the collet release throat passage 755. The fourth passage 700 is preferably defined by the interiors of the second support member 515, the force multiplier inner support member 530, the first coupling 545, the third support member 550, the second coupling 605, and the collet mandrel 610. The fourth passage 700 is preferably adapted to convey fluidic materials such as, for example, drilling mud, cement, and/or lubricants. The fourth passage 700 is preferably adapted to convey fluidic materials at operating pressures and flow rates ranging from about 0 to 10,000 psi and 0 to 650 gallons/minute.

The inner crossover ports 705 are fluidically coupled to the fourth passage 700 and the corresponding crossover valve chambers 685. The inner crossover ports 705 are preferably defined by substantially radial openings provided in an interior wall of the second support member 515. The inner crossover ports 705 are preferably adapted to convey fluidic materials such as, for example, drilling mud, cement, and lubricants. The inner crossover ports 705 are preferably adapted to convey fluidic materials at operating pressures and flow rates ranging from about 0 to 10,000 psi and 0 to 50 gallons/minute.

During operation of the apparatus 500, preferably the inner crossover ports 705 are controllably fluidically coupled to the corresponding crossover valve chambers 685 and outer crossover ports 710 by displacement of the corresponding crossover valve members 520. In this manner, fluidic materials within the fourth passage 700 are exhausted to the exterior of the apparatus 500.

The outer crossover ports 710 are fluidically coupled to corresponding crossover valve chambers 685 and the exterior of the apparatus 500. The outer crossover ports 710 are preferably defined by substantially radial openings provided in an exterior wall of the second support member 515. The outer crossover ports 710 are preferably

adapted to convey fluidic materials such as, for example, drilling mud, cement, and lubricants. The outer crossover ports 710 are preferably adapted to convey fluidic materials at operating pressures and flow rates ranging from about 0 to 10,000 psi and 0 to 50 gallons/minute.

5 During operation of the apparatus 500, preferably the outer crossover ports 710 are controllably fluidically coupled to the corresponding crossover valve chambers 685 and inner crossover ports 705 by displacement of the corresponding crossover valve members 520. In this manner, fluidic materials within the fourth passage 700 are exhausted to the exterior of the apparatus 500.

10 The force multiplier piston chamber 715 is fluidically coupled to the third passage 680. The force multiplier piston chamber 715 is preferably defined by the annular region defined by the radial gap between the force multiplier inner support member 530 and the force multiplier outer support member 525 and the axial gap between the end of the second support member 515 and the end of the lubrication fitting 565.

15 During operation of the apparatus, preferably the force multiplier piston chamber 715 is pressurized to operating pressures ranging from about 0 to 10,000 psi. The pressurization of the force multiplier piston chamber 715 preferably displaces the force multiplier piston 535 and the force multiplier sleeve 540. The displacement of the force multiplier piston 535 and the force multiplier sleeve 540 in turn preferably

20 displaces the mandrel 580 and expansion cone 585. In this manner, the liner hanger 595 is radially expanded. The pressurization of the force multiplier piston chamber 715 preferably directly displaces the mandrel 580 and the expansion cone 585. In this manner, the force multiplier piston 535 and the force multiplier sleeve 540 may be omitted. The lubrication fitting 565 preferably further includes one or more slots 566  
25 for facilitating the passage of pressurized fluids to act directly upon the mandrel 580 and expansion cone 585.

The force multiplier exhaust chamber 720 is fluidically coupled to the force multiplier exhaust passages 725. The force multiplier exhaust chamber 720 is preferably defined by the annular region defined by the radial gap between the force

- multiplier inner support member 530 and the force multiplier sleeve 540 and the axial gap between the force multiplier piston 535 and the first coupling 545. During operation of the apparatus 500, preferably fluidic materials within the force multiplier exhaust chamber 720 are exhausted into the fourth passage 700 using the force
- 5 multiplier exhaust passages 725. In this manner, during operation of the apparatus 500, the pressure differential across the force multiplier piston 535 is substantially equal to the difference in operating pressures between the force multiplier piston chamber 715 and the fourth passage 700.

The force multiplier exhaust passages 725 are fluidically coupled to the force  
10 multiplier exhaust chamber 720 and the fourth passage 700. The force multiplier exhaust passages 725 are preferably defined by substantially radial openings provided in the second end 1160 of the force multiplier inner support member 530.

The second annular chamber 735 is fluidically coupled to the third annular chamber 750. The second annular chamber 735 is preferably defined by the annular  
15 region defined by the radial gap between the third support member 550 and the liner hanger 595 and the axial gap between the centralizer 590 and the collet assembly 625. During operation of the apparatus 500, preferably fluidic materials displaced by movement of the mandrel 580 and expansion cone 585 are conveyed from the second annular chamber 735 to the third annular chamber 750, the sixth passages 765, and the  
20 sixth passage 760. In this manner, the operation of the apparatus 500 is optimized.

The expansion cone travel indicator ports 740 are fluidically coupled to the fourth passage 700. The expansion cone travel indicator ports 740 are controllably fluidically coupled to the second annular chamber 735. The expansion cone travel indicator ports 740 are preferably defined by radial openings in the third support member 550. During  
25 operation of the apparatus 500, preferably the expansion cone travel indicator ports 740 are further controllably fluidically coupled to the force multiplier piston chamber 715 by displacement of the travel port sealing sleeve 600 caused by axial displacement of the mandrel 580 and expansion cone 585. In this manner, the completion of the radial

expansion process is indicated by a pressure drop caused by fluidically coupling the force multiplier piston chamber 715 with the fourth passage 700.

- The collet release ports 745 are fluidically coupled to the fourth passage 700 and the collet sleeve release chamber 805. The collet release ports 745 are controllably fluidically coupled to the second and third annular chambers, 735 and 750. The collet release ports 745 are defined by radial openings in the collet mandrel 610. During operation of the apparatus 500, preferably the collet release ports 745 are controllably pressurized by blocking the collet release throat passage 755 using a conventional ball or plug. The pressurization of the collet release throat passage 755 in turn pressurizes the collet sleeve release chamber 805. The pressure differential between the pressurized collet sleeve release chamber 805 and the third annular chamber 750 then preferably shears the collet shear pins 665 and displaces the collet retaining sleeve 635 in the axial direction.

- The third annular chamber 750 is fluidically coupled to the second annular chamber 735 and the sixth passages 765. The third annular chamber 750 is controllably fluidically coupled to the collet release ports 745. The third annular chamber 750 is preferably defined by the annular region defined by the radial gap between the collet mandrel 610 and the collet assembly 625 and the first end 1585 of the collet retaining adapter and the axial gap between the collet assembly 625 and the intermediate portion 1590 of the collet retaining adapter 640.

- The collet release throat passage 755 is fluidically coupled to the fourth passage 700 and the fifth passage 760. The collet release throat passage 755 is preferably defined by a transitionary section of the interior of the collet mandrel 610 including a first inside diameter that transitions into a second smaller inside diameter. The collet release throat passage 755 is preferably adapted to receive and mate with a conventional sealing plug or ball. In this manner, the fourth passage 700 is optimally fluidically isolated from the fifth passage 760. The maximum inside diameter of the collet release throat passage 755 is preferably less than or equal to the minimum inside diameters of the primary and secondary throat passages, 690 and 695.

During operation of the apparatus 500, preferably a conventional sealing plug or ball is placed in the collet release throat passage 755. The fourth passage 700 and the collet release ports 745 are then pressurized. The pressurization of the collet release throat passage 755 in turn pressurizes the collet sleeve release chamber 805. The 5 pressure differential between the pressurized collet sleeve release chamber 805 and the third annular chamber 750 then preferably shears the collet shear pins 665 and displaces the collet retaining sleeve 635 in the axial direction.

The fifth passage 760 is fluidically coupled to the collet release throat passage 755 and the sixth passages 765. The fifth passage 760 is preferably defined by the interior 10 of the second end 1595 of the collet retaining adapter 640.

The sixth passages 765 are fluidically coupled to the fifth passage 760 and the third annular chamber 750. The sixth passages 765 are preferably defined by approximately radial openings provided in the intermediate portion 1590 of the collet retaining adapter 640. During operation of the apparatus 500, preferably the sixth 15 passages 765 fluidically couple the third annular passage 750 to the fifth passage 760. In this manner, fluidic materials displaced by axial movement of the mandrel 580 and expansion cone 585 are exhausted to the fifth passage 760.

The seventh passages 770 are fluidically coupled to corresponding crossover valve chambers 685 and the fourth passage 700. The seventh passages 770 are preferably 20 defined by radial openings in the intermediate portion 1065 of the second support member 515. During operation of the apparatus 700, the seventh passage 770 preferably maintain the rear portions of the corresponding crossover valve chamber 685 at the same operating pressure as the fourth passage 700. In this manner, the pressure differential across the crossover valve members 520 caused by blocking the primary 25 and/or the secondary throat passages, 690 and 695, is optimally maintained.

The collet sleeve passages 775 are fluidically coupled to the second annular chamber 735 and the third annular chamber 750. The collet sleeve passages 775 are preferably adapted to convey fluidic materials between the second annular chamber 735

and the third annular chamber 750. The collet sleeve passages 735 are preferably defined by axial openings provided in the collet sleeve 635.

The force multiplier supply passages 790 are fluidically coupled to the third passage 680 and the force multiplier piston chamber 715. The force multiplier supply passages 790 are preferably defined by a plurality of substantially axial openings in the second support member 515. During operation of the apparatus 500, the force multiplier supply passages 790 preferably convey pressurized fluidic materials from the third passage 680 to the force multiplier piston chamber 715.

The first lubrication supply passage 795 is fluidically coupled to the lubrication fitting 1285 and the body of lubricant 575. The first lubrication supply passage 795 is preferably defined by openings provided in the lubrication fitting 565 and the annular region defined by the radial gap between the lubrication fitting 565 and the mandrel 580. During operation of the apparatus 500, the first lubrication passage 795 is preferably adapted to convey lubricants from the lubrication fitting 1285 to the body of lubricant 575.

The second lubrication supply passage 800 is fluidically coupled to the body of lubricant 575 and the expansion cone 585. The second lubrication supply passage 800 is preferably defined by the annular region defined by the radial gap between the expansion mandrel 580 and the liner hanger 595. During operation of the apparatus 500, the second lubrication passage 800 is preferably adapted to convey lubricants from the body of lubricant 575 to the expansion cone 585. In this manner, the dynamic interface between the expansion cone 585 and the liner hanger 595 is optimally lubricated.

The collet sleeve release chamber 805 is fluidically coupled to the collet release ports 745. The collet sleeve release chamber 805 is preferably defined by the annular region bounded by the recess 1455 and the second shoulder 1575. During operation of the apparatus 500, the collet sleeve release chamber 805 is preferably controllably pressurized. This manner, the collet release sleeve 635 is axially displaced.

Referring to FIGS. 4A to 4G, during operation of the apparatus 500, the

apparatus 500 is coupled to an annular support member 2000 having an internal passage 2001, a first coupling 2005 having an internal passage 2010, a second coupling 2015, a third coupling 2020 having an internal passage 2025, a fourth coupling 2030 having an internal passage 2035, a tail wiper 2050 having an internal passage 2055, a lead wiper 2060 having an internal passage 2065, and one or more tubular members 2070.

5        The annular support member 2000 may include any number of conventional commercially available annular support members. The annular support member 2000 preferably further includes a conventional controllable vent passage for venting fluidic materials from the internal passage 2001. In this manner, during placement of the  
10      apparatus 500 in the wellbore 2000, fluidic materials in the internal passage 2001 are vented thereby minimizing surge pressures.

15      The first coupling 2005 is preferably removably coupled to the second threaded portion 1615 of the collet retaining adapter 640 and the second coupling 2015. The first coupling 2005 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available couplings. The first coupling 2005 is preferably an equalizer case available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide containment of the equalizer valve.

20      The second coupling 2015 is preferably removably coupled to the first coupling 2005 and the third coupling 2020. The second coupling 2015 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available couplings. The second coupling 2015 is preferably a bearing housing available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide containment of the bearings.

25      The third coupling 2020 is preferably removably coupled to the second coupling 2015 and the fourth coupling 2030. The third coupling 2020 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available couplings. The third coupling 2020 is preferably an SSR swivel mandrel available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide for rotation of tubular members positioned above the SSR plug set.

The fourth coupling 2030 is preferably removably coupled to the third coupling 2020 and the tail wiper 2050. The fourth coupling 2030 may comprise any number of

conventional commercially available couplings. The fourth coupling 2030 is preferably a lower connector available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide a connection to a SSR plug set.

The tail wiper 2050 is preferably removably coupled to the fourth coupling 2030  
5 and the lead wiper 2060. The tail wiper 2050 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available tail wipers. The tail wiper 2050 is preferably an SSR top plug available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide separation of cement and drilling mud.

The lead wiper 2060 is preferably removably coupled to the tail wiper 2050.  
10 The lead wiper 2060 may comprise any number of conventional commercially available tail wipers. The lead wiper 2060 is preferably an SSR bottom plug available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide separation of mud and cement.

The first coupling 2005, the second coupling 2015, the third coupling 2020, the  
15 fourth coupling 2030, the tail wiper 2050, and the lead wiper 2060 are preferably a conventional SSR wiper assembly available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide separation of mud and cement.

The tubular member 2070 are coupled to the threaded portion 1673 of the liner  
hanger setting sleeve 650. The tubular member 2070 may include one or more tubular  
20 members. The tubular member 2070 preferably includes a plurality of conventional tubular members coupled end to end.

The apparatus 500 is then preferably positioned in a wellbore 2100 having a preexisting section of wellbore casing 2105 using the annular support member 2000. The wellbore 2100 and casing 2105 may be oriented in any direction from the vertical  
25 to the horizontal. The apparatus 500 is preferably positioned within the wellbore 2100 with the liner hanger 595 overlapping with at least a portion of the preexisting wellbore casing 2105. During placement of the apparatus 500 within the wellbore 2100, preferably fluidic materials 2200 within the wellbore 2100 are conveyed through the internal passage 2065, the internal passage 2055, the internal passage 2035, the internal

passage 2025, the internal passage 2010, the fifth passage 760, the collet release throat passage 755, the fourth passage 700, the primary throat passage 690, the secondary throat passage 695, the first passage 670, and the internal passage 2001. In this manner, surge pressures during insertion and placement of the apparatus 500 within the wellbore 2000 are minimized. The internal passage 2001 preferably further includes a controllable venting passage for conveying fluidic materials out of the internal passage 2001.

- Referring to FIGS. 5A to 5C, in the event of an emergency after placement of the apparatus 500 within the wellbore 2000, the liner hanger 595, the outer collet support member 645, and the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 are decoupled from the apparatus 500 by first placing a ball 2300 within the collet release throat passage 755. A quantity of a fluidic material 2305 is then injected into the fourth passage 700, the collet release ports 745, and the collet sleeve release chamber 805. The fluidic material 2305 is preferably a non-hardenable fluidic material such as, for example, drilling mud.
- Continued injection of the fluidic material 2305 preferably pressurizes the collet sleeve release chamber 805. The collet sleeve release chamber 805 is preferably pressurized to operating pressures ranging from about 1,000 to 3,000 psi in order to optimally provide a positive indication of the shifting of the collet retaining sleeve 635 as indicated by a sudden pressure drop. The pressurization of the collet sleeve release chamber 805 preferably applies an axial force to the collet retaining sleeve 635. The axial force applied to the collet retaining sleeve 635 preferably shears the collet retaining sleeve shear pins 665. The collet retaining sleeve 635 then preferably is displaced in the axial direction 2310 away from the collet upsets 1525. The collet retaining sleeve 635 is preferably axially displaced when the operating pressure within the collet sleeve release chamber 805 is greater than about 1650 psi. In this manner, the collet upsets 1525 are no longer held in place within the collet slots 1600 and 1665 by the collet retaining sleeve 635.

The collet mandrel 610 is preferably then displaced in the axial direction 2315 causing the collet upsets 1525 to be moved in a radial direction 2320 out of the collet

slots 1665. The liner hanger 595, the outer collet support member 645, and the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 are thereby decoupled from the remaining portions of the apparatus 500. The remaining portions of the apparatus 500 are then removed from the wellbore 2100. In this manner, in the event of an emergency during operation of the

5       apparatus, the liner hanger 595, the outer collet support member 645, and the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 are decoupled from the apparatus 500. This provides an reliable and efficient method of recovering from an emergency situation such as, for example, where the liner hanger 595, and/or outer collet support member 645, and/or the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 become lodged within the wellbore 2100 and/or the

10     wellbore casing 2105.

Referring to FIGS. 6A to 6C, after positioning the apparatus 500 within the wellbore 2100, the lead wiper 2060 is released from the apparatus 500 by injecting a conventional ball 2400 into an end portion of the lead wiper 2060 using a fluidic material 2405. The fluidic material 2405 is preferably a non-hardenable fluidic

15     material such as, for example, drilling mud.

Referring to FIGS. 7A to 7G, after releasing the lead wiper 2060 from the apparatus 500, a quantity of a hardenable fluidic sealing material 2500 is injected from the apparatus 500 into the wellbore 2100 using the internal passage 2001, the first passage 670, the secondary throat passage 695, the primary throat passage 690, the

20     fourth passage 700, the collet release throat passage 755, the fifth passage 760, the internal passage 2010, the internal passage 2025, the internal passage 2035, and the internal passage 2055. The hardenable fluidic sealing material 2500 preferably substantially fills the annular space surrounding the liner hanger 595. The hardenable fluidic sealing material 2500 may include any number of conventional hardenable

25     fluidic sealing materials such as, for example, cement or epoxy resin. The hardenable fluidic sealing material preferably includes oil well cement available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to provide an optimal seal for the surrounding formations and structural support for the liner hanger 595 and tubular members 2070. The injection of the hardenable fluidic sealing material 2500 is preferably omitted.

As illustrated in FIG. 7C, prior to the initiation of the radial expansion process, the preload spring 560 exerts a substantially constant axial force on the mandrel 580 and expansion cone 585. In this manner, the expansion cone 585 is maintained in a substantially stationary position prior to the initiation of the radial expansion process.

- 5 The amount of axial force exerted by the preload spring 560 is preferably varied by varying the length of the spring spacer 555. The axial force exerted by the preload spring 560 on the mandrel 580 and expansion cone 585 preferably ranges from about 500 to 2,000 lbf in order to optimally provide an axial preload force on the expansion cone 585 to ensure metal to metal contact between the outside diameter of the
- 10 expansion cone 585 and the interior surface of the liner hanger 595. Referring to FIGS. 8A to 8C, after injecting the hardenable fluidic sealing material 2500 out of the apparatus 500 and into the wellbore 2100, the tail wiper 2050 is preferably released from the apparatus 500 by injecting a conventional wiper dart 2600 into the tail wiper 2050 using a fluidic material 2605. The fluidic material 2605 is preferably a non-
- 15 hardenable fluidic material such as, for example, drilling mud.

- Referring to FIGS. 9A to 9H, after releasing the tail wiper 2050 from the apparatus 500, a conventional ball plug 2700 is placed in the primary throat passage 690 by injecting a fluidic material 2705 into the first passage 670. A conventional ball plug 2710 is preferably also placed in the secondary throat passage 695. In this manner, the first passage 670 is optimally fluidically isolated from the fourth passage 700. The differential pressure across the ball plugs 2700 and/or 2710 preferably ranges from about 0 to 10,000 psi in order to optimally fluidically isolate the first passage 670 from the fourth passage 700. The fluidic material 2705 is preferably a non-hardenable fluidic material. The fluidic material 2705 preferably includes one or more of the following: drilling mud, water, oil and lubricants.

The injected fluidic material 2705 preferably is conveyed to the crossover valve chamber 685 through the first passage 670, the second passages 675, and the third passage 680. The injected fluidic material 2705 is also preferably conveyed to the force multiplier piston chamber 715 through the first passage 670, the second passages 675,

the third passage 680, and the force multiplier supply passages 790. The fluidic material 2705 injected into the crossover valve chambers 685 preferably applies an axial force on one end of the crossover valve members 520. The axial force applied to the crossover valve members 520 by the injected fluidic material 2705 preferably

5 shears the crossover valve shear pins 655. In this manner, one or more of the crossover valve members 520 are displaced in the axial direction thereby fluidically coupling the fourth passage 700, the inner crossover ports 705, the crossover valve chambers 685, the outer crossover ports 710, and the region outside of the apparatus 500. In this manner, fluidic materials 2715 within the apparatus 500 are conveyed outside of the

10 apparatus. The operating pressure of the fluidic material 2705 is preferably gradually increased after the placement of the sealing ball 2700 and/or the sealing ball 2710 in the primary throat passage 690 and/or the secondary throat passage 695 in order to minimize stress on the apparatus 500. The operating pressure required to displace the crossover valve members 520 preferably ranges from about 500 to 3,000 psi in order to

15 optimally prevent inadvertent or premature shifting the crossover valve members 520. The one or more of the crossover valve members 520 are preferably displaced when the operating pressure of the fluidic material 2705 is greater than or equal to about 1860 psi. The radial expansion of the liner hanger 595 preferably does not begin until one or more of the crossover valve members 520 are displaced in the axial direction. In this

20 manner, the operation of the apparatus 500 is precisely controlled. Furthermore, the outer crossover ports 710 include controllable variable orifices in order to control the flow rate of the fluidic materials conveyed outside of the apparatus 500. In this manner, the rate of the radial expansion process is optimally controlled.

After displacing one or more of the crossover valve members 520, preferably the

25 operating pressure of the fluidic material 2705 is gradually increased until the radial expansion process begins. In an exemplary embodiment, the radial expansion process begins when the operating pressure of the fluidic material 2705 within the force multiplier piston chamber 715 is greater than about 3200 psi. The operating pressure within the force multiplier piston chamber 715 preferably causes the force multiplier

piston 535 to be displaced in the axial direction. The axial displacement of the force multiplier piston 535 preferably causes the force multiplier sleeve 540 to be displaced in the axial direction. Fluidic materials 2720 within the force multiplier exhaust chamber 720 are then preferably exhausted into the fourth passage 700 through the force multiplier exhaust passages 725. In this manner, the differential pressure across the force multiplier piston 535 is maximized. In an exemplary embodiment, the force multiplier piston 535 includes about 11.65 square inches of surface area in order to optimally increase the rate of radial expansion of the liner hanger 595 by the expansion cone 585. The operating pressure within the force multiplier piston chamber 715 preferably ranges from about 1,000 to 10,000 psi during the radial expansion process in order to optimally provide radial expansion of the liner hanger 595.

The axial displacement of the force multiplier sleeve 540 preferably causes the force multiplier sleeve 540 to drive the mandrel 580 and expansion cone 585 in the axial direction. The axial displacement of the expansion cone 585 radially expands the liner hanger 595 into contact with the preexisting wellbore casing 2105. The operating pressure within the force multiplier piston chamber 715 preferably also drives the mandrel 580 and expansion cone 585 in the axial direction. In this manner, the axial force for axially displacing the mandrel 580 and expansion cone 585 preferably includes the axial force applied by the force multiplier sleeve 540 and the axial force applied by the operating pressure within the force multiplier piston chamber 715. The force multiplier piston 535 and the force multiplier sleeve 540 are omitted and the mandrel 580 and expansion cone 585 are driven solely by fluid pressure.

The radial expansion of the liner hanger 595 preferably causes the top rings 1385 and the lower rings 1390 of the liner hanger 595 to penetrate the interior walls of the preexisting wellbore casing 2105. In this manner, the liner hanger 595 is optimally coupled to the wellbore casing 2105. During the radial expansion of the liner hanger 595, preferably the intermediate sealing members 1395 of the liner hanger 595 fluidically seal the interface between the radially expanded liner hanger 595 and the interior surface of the wellbore casing 2105.

During the radial expansion process, the dynamic interface between the exterior surface of the expansion cone 585 and the interior surface of the liner hanger 595 is preferably lubricated by lubricants supplied from the body of lubricant 575 through the second lubrication supply passage 800. In this manner, the operational efficiency of the apparatus 500 during the radial expansion process is optimized. The lubricants supplied by the body of lubricant 575 through the second lubrication passage 800 are preferably injected into the dynamic interface between the exterior surface of the expansion cone 585 and the interior surface of the liner hanger 595 substantially as disclosed in one or more of the following: (1) U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/440,338, attorney docket number 25791.9.02, filed on 11/15/1999 now United States Patent 6,328,113, which claimed benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/108,558, attorney docket number 25791.9, filed on 11/16/1998, (2) U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/454,139, attorney docket number 25791.3.02, filed on 12/31/1999 now United States Patent 6,497,289, which claimed benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/111,293, filed on 12/7/1998, (3) U.S. Patent Application Serial Number 09/502,350, attorney docket number 25791.8.02, filed on 2/10/2000, which claimed the benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/119,611, attorney docket number 25791.8, filed 2/11/1999, (4) U.S. Patent Application Serial Number 09/510,913, attorney docket number 25791.7.02, filed on 2/23/2000, which claimed the benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/121,702, attorney docket number 25791.7, filed on 2/25/1999, (5) U.S. Patent Application Serial Number 09/511,941, attorney docket number 25791.16.02, filed on 2/24/2000 now United States Patent 6,575,240, which claimed the benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application number 60/121,907, attorney docket number 25791.16, filed 2/26/1999, (6) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/124,042, attorney docket number 25791.11, filed on 3/11/1999, (7) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/131,106, attorney docket number 25791.23, filed on 4/26/1999, (8) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number

60/137,998, attorney docket number 25791.17, filed on 6/7/1999, (9) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/143,039, attorney docket number 25791.26, filed on 7/9/1999, and (10) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/146,203, attorney docket number 25791.25, filed on 7/29/1999, the disclosures of which are  
5 incorporated by reference.

The expansion cone 585 is reversible. In this manner, if one end of the expansion cone 585 becomes excessively worn, the apparatus 500 can be disassembled and the expansion cone 585 reversed in order to use the un-worn end of the expansion cone 585 to radially expand the liner hanger 595. The expansion cone 585 preferably  
10 further includes one or more surface inserts fabricated from materials such as, for example, tungsten carbide, in order to provide an extremely durable material for contacting the interior surface of the liner hanger 595 during the radial expansion process.

During the radial expansion process, the centralizer 590 preferably centrally  
15 positions the mandrel 580 and the expansion cone 585 within the interior of the liner hanger 595. In this manner, the radial expansion process is optimally provided.

During the radial expansion process, fluidic materials 2725 within the second annular chamber 735 are preferably conveyed to the fifth passage 760 through the collet sleeve passages 775, the flow passages 1530, the third annular chamber 750, and the  
20 sixth passages 765. In this manner, the axial displacement of the mandrel 580 and the expansion cone 585 are optimized.

Referring to FIGS. 10A to 10E, the radial expansion of the liner hanger 595 is stopped by fluidically coupling the force multiplier piston chamber 715 with the fourth passage 700. In particular, during the radial expansion process, the continued axial  
25 displacement of the mandrel 580 and the expansion cone 585, caused by the injection of the fluidic material 2705, displaces the travel port sealing sleeve 600 and causes the force multiplier piston chamber 715 to be fluidically coupled to the fourth passage 700 through the expansion cone travel indicator ports 740. The travel port sealing sleeve 600 is preferably removably coupled to the third support member 550 by one or more

shear pins. In this manner, accidental movement of the travel port sealing sleeve 600 is prevented.

- The fluidic coupling of the force multiplier piston chamber 715 with the fourth passage 700 preferably reduces the operating pressure within the force multiplier piston chamber 715. The reduction in the operating pressure within the force multiplier piston chamber 715 preferably stops the axial displacement of the mandrel 580 and the expansion cone 585. In this manner, the radial expansion of the liner hanger 595 is optimally stopped. The drop in the operating pressure within the force multiplier piston chamber 715 is preferably remotely detected and the injection of the fluidic material 2705 is reduced and/or stopped in order to gradually reduce and/or stop the radial expansion process. In this manner, the radial expansion process is optimally controlled by sensing the operating pressure within the force multiplier piston chamber 715.

- After the completion of the radial expansion process, the hardenable fluidic sealing material 2500 is preferably cured. In this manner, a hard annular outer layer of sealing material is formed in the annular region around the liner hanger 595. The hardenable fluidic sealing material 2500 is preferably omitted.

- Referring to FIGS. 11A to 11E, the liner hanger 595, the outer collet support member 645, and the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 are then decoupled from the apparatus 500. The liner hanger 595, the collet retaining adapter 640, the outer collet support member 645, and the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 are preferably decoupled from the apparatus 500 by first displacing the annular support member 2000, the first support member 505, the second support member 515, the force multiplier outer support member 525, the force multiplier inner support member 530, the first coupling 545, the third support member 550, the second coupling 605, the collet mandrel 610, and the collet retaining adapter 640 in the axial direction 2800 relative to the liner hanger 595, the outer collet support member 645, and the liner hanger setting sleeve 650.

In particular, as illustrated in FIG. 11D, the axial displacement of the collet mandrel 610 in the axial direction 2800 preferably displaces the collet retaining sleeve

- 635 in the axial direction 2800 relative to the collet upsets 1525. In this manner, the collet upsets 1525 are no longer held in the collet slots 1665 by the collet retaining sleeve 635. Furthermore, the axial displacement of the collet mandrel 610 in the axial direction 2800 preferably displaces the first shoulder 1445 in the axial direction 2800
- 5 relative to the locking dogs 620. In this manner, the locking dogs 620 lock onto the first shoulder 1445 when the collet mandrel 610 is then displaced in the axial direction 2805. Axial displacement of the collet mandrel of about 1.50 inches preferably displaces the collet retaining sleeve 635 out from under the collet upsets 1525 and also locks the locking dogs 620 onto the first shoulder 1445 of the collet mandrel 610.
- 10 Furthermore, the axial displacement of the collet retaining adapter 640 in the axial direction 2800 also preferably displaces the slots 1600 away from the collet upsets 1525.

The liner hanger 595, the collet retaining adapter 640, the outer collet support member 645, and the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 are preferably then decoupled

15 from the apparatus 500 by displacing the annular support member 2000, the first support member 505, the second support member 515, the force multiplier outer support member 525, the force multiplier inner support member 530, the first coupling 545, the third support member 550, the second coupling 605, the collet mandrel 610, and the collet retaining adapter 640 in the axial direction 2805 relative to the liner

20 hanger 595, the outer collet support member 645, and the liner hanger setting sleeve 650. In particular, the subsequent axial displacement of the collet mandrel 610 in the axial direction 2805 preferably pulls and decouples the collet upsets 1525 from the collet slots 1665. The angled outer surfaces 1545 of the collet upsets 1525 preferably facilitate the decoupling process.

25 If the locking dogs 620 do not lock onto the first shoulder 1445 of the collet mandrel 610, then the annular support member 2000, the first support member 505, the second support member 515, the force multiplier outer support member 525, the force multiplier inner support member 530, the first coupling 545, the third support member 550, the second coupling 605, the collet mandrel 610, and the collet retaining adapter

640 are then displaced back in the axial direction 2800 and rotated. The rotation of the annular support member 2000, the first support member 505, the second support member 515, the force multiplier outer support member 525, the force multiplier inner support member 530, the first coupling 545, the third support member 550, the second coupling 605, the collet mandrel 610, and the collet retaining adapter 640 preferably misaligns the collet slots 1600 and 1665. In this manner, a subsequent displacement of the in the axial direction 2805 pushes the collet upsets 1525 out of the collet slots 1665 in the liner hanger setting sleeve 650. The amount of rotation preferably ranges from about 5 to 40 degrees. In this manner, the liner hanger 595, the outer collet support member 645, and the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 are then decoupled from the apparatus 500.

The removal of the apparatus 500 from the interior of the radially expanded liner hanger 595 is preferably facilitated by the presence of the body of lubricant 575. In particular, the body of lubricant 575 preferably lubricates the interface between the interior surface of the radially expanded liner hanger 595 and the exterior surface of the expansion cone 585. In this manner, the axial force required to remove the apparatus 500 from the interior of the radially expanded liner hanger 595 is minimized.

Referring to FIGS. 12A to 12C, after the removal of the remaining portions of the apparatus 500, a new section of wellbore casing is provided that preferably includes the liner hanger 595, the outer collet support member 645, the liner hanger setting sleeve 650, the tubular members 2070 and an outer annular layer of cured material 2900.

The interior of the radially expanded liner hanger 595 is preferably used as a polished bore receptacle ("PBR"). The interior of the radially expanded liner hanger 595 is preferably machined and then used as a PBR. The first end 1350 of the liner hanger 595 is threaded and coupled to a PBR.

All surfaces of the apparatus 500 that provide a dynamic seal are preferably nickel plated in order to provide optimal wear resistance.

Referring to FIGS. 13A to 13G, an alternative embodiment of an apparatus 3000 for forming or repairing a wellbore casing, pipeline or structural support will be described. The apparatus 3000 preferably includes the first support member 505, the debris shield 510, the second support member 515, the one or more crossover valve members 520, the force multiplier outer support member 525, the force multiplier inner support member 530, the force multiplier piston 535, the force multiplier sleeve 540, the first coupling 545, the third support member 550, the spring spacer 555, the preload spring 560, the lubrication fitting 565, the lubrication packer sleeve 570, the body of lubricant 575, the mandrel 580, the expansion cone 585, the centralizer 590, the liner hanger 595, the travel port sealing sleeve 600, the second coupling 605, the collet mandrel 610, the load transfer sleeve 615, the one or more locking dogs 620, the locking dog retainer 622, the collet assembly 625, the collet retaining sleeve 635, the collet retaining adapter 640, the outer collet support member 645, the liner hanger setting sleeve 650, the one or more crossover valve shear pins 655, the one or more 10 collet retaining sleeve shear pins 665, the first passage 670, the one or more second passages 675, the third passage 680, the one or more crossover valve chambers 685, the primary throat passage 690, the secondary throat passage 695, the fourth passage 700, the one or more inner crossover ports 705, the one or more outer crossover ports 710, the force multiplier piston chamber 715, the force multiplier exhaust chamber 720, the 15 one or more force multiplier exhaust passages 725, the second annular chamber 735, the one or more expansion cone travel indicator ports 740, the one or more collet release ports 745, the third annular chamber 750, the collet release throat passage 755, the fifth passage 760, the one or more sixth passages 765, the one or more seventh 20 passages 770, the one or more collet sleeve passages 775, the one or more force multiplier supply passages 790, the first lubrication supply passage 795, the second lubrication supply passage 800, the collet sleeve release chamber 805, and a standoff adaptor 3005.

Except as described below, the design and operation of the first support member 505, the debris shield 510, the second support member 515, the one or more crossover

- valve members 520, the force multiplier outer support member 525, the force multiplier inner support member 530, the force multiplier piston 535, the force multiplier sleeve 540, the first coupling 545, the third support member 550, the spring spacer 555, the preload spring 560, the lubrication fitting 565, the lubrication packer sleeve 570, the body of lubricant 575, the mandrel 580, the expansion cone 585, the centralizer 590, the liner hanger 595, the travel port sealing sleeve 600, the second coupling 605, the collet mandrel 610, the load transfer sleeve 615, the one or more locking dogs 620, the locking dog retainer 622, the collet assembly 625, the collet retaining sleeve 635, the collet retaining adapter 640, the outer collet support member 645, the liner hanger setting sleeve 650, the one or more crossover valve shear pins 655, the one or more collet retaining sleeve shear pins 665, the first passage 670, the one or more second passages 675, the third passage 680, the one or more crossover valve chambers 685, the primary throat passage 690, the secondary throat passage 695, the fourth passage 700, the one or more inner crossover ports 705, the one or more outer crossover ports 710,
- the force multiplier piston chamber 715, the force multiplier exhaust chamber 720, the one or more force multiplier exhaust passages 725, the second annular chamber 735, the one or more expansion cone travel indicator ports 740, the one or more collet release ports 745, the third annular chamber 750, the collet release throat passage 755, the fifth passage 760, the one or more sixth passages 765, the one or more seventh passages 770, the one or more collet sleeve passages 775, the one or more force multiplier supply passages 790, the first lubrication supply passage 795, the second lubrication supply passage 800, and the collet sleeve release chamber 805 of the apparatus 3000 are preferably provided as described above with reference to the apparatus 500 in FIGS. 2A to 12C.
- Referring to FIGS. 13A to 13C, the standoff adaptor 3005 is coupled to the first end 1005 of the first support member 505. The standoff adaptor 3005 preferably has a substantially annular cross-section. The standoff adaptor 3005 may be fabricated from any number of conventional commercially available materials. The standoff adaptor 3005 is fabricated from alloy steel having a minimum yield strength of

about 75,000 to 140,000 psi in order to optimally provide high tensile strength and resistance to abrasion and fluid erosion. The standoff adaptor 3005 preferably includes a first end 3010, a second end 3015, an intermediate portion 3020, a first threaded portion 3025, one or more slots 3030, and a second threaded portion 3035.

5       The first end 3010 of the standoff adaptor 3005 preferably includes the first threaded portion 3025. The first threaded portion 3025 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to a conventional tubular support member. The first threaded portion 3025 may be any number of conventional threaded portions. The first threaded portion 3025 is preferably a 4 ½" API IF JT BOX thread in order to optimally provide  
10      tensile strength.

The intermediate portion 3020 of the standoff adaptor 3005 preferably includes the slots 3030. The outside diameter of the intermediate portion 3020 of the standoff adaptor 3005 is preferably greater than the outside diameter of the liner hanger 595 in order to optimally protect the sealing members 1395, and the top and bottom rings, 15      1380 and 1390, from abrasion when positioning and/or rotating the apparatus 3000 within a wellbore, or other tubular member. The intermediate portion 3020 of the standoff adaptor 3005 preferably includes a plurality of axial slots 3030 equally positioned about the circumference of the intermediate portion 3020 in order to optimally permit wellbore fluids and other materials to be conveyed along the outside 20      surface of the apparatus 3000.

The second end of the standoff adaptor 3005 preferably includes the second threaded portion 3035. The second threaded portion 3035 is preferably adapted to be removably coupled to the first threaded portion 1015 of the first end 1005 of the first support member 505. The second threaded portion 3035 may be any number of conventional threaded portions. The second threaded portion 3035 is preferably a 4 ½" API IF JT PIN thread in order to optimally provide tensile strength.  
25

Referring to FIGS. 13D and 13E, in the apparatus 3000, the second end 1360 of the liner hanger 595 is preferably coupled to the first end 1620 of the outer collet support member 645 using a threaded connection 3040. The threaded connection 3040

is preferably adapted to provide a threaded connection having a primary metal-to-metal seal 3045a and a secondary metal-to-metal seal 3045b in order to optimally provide a fluidic seal. The threaded connection 3040 is preferably a DS HST threaded connection available from Halliburton Energy Services in order to optimally provide

5 high tensile strength and a fluidic seal for high operating temperatures.

Referring to FIGS. 13D and 13F, in the apparatus 3000, the second end 1625 of the outer collet support member 645 is preferably coupled to the first end 1650 of the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 using a substantially permanent connection 3050. In this manner, the tensile strength of the connection between the second end 1625 of the

10 outer collet support member 645 and the first end 1650 of the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 is optimized. The permanent connection 3050 preferably includes a threaded connection 3055 and a welded connection 3060. In this manner, the tensile strength of the connection between the second end 1625 of the outer collet support member 645 and the first end 1650 of the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 is optimized.

Referring to FIGS. 13D, 13E and 13F, in the apparatus 3000, the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 further preferably includes an intermediate portion 3065 having one or more axial slots 3070. The outside diameter of the intermediate portion 3065 of the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 is preferably greater than the outside diameter of the liner hanger 595 in order to protect the sealing elements 1395 and the top and bottom rings, 1385 and 1390, from abrasion when positioning and/or rotating the apparatus 3000 within a wellbore casing or other tubular member. The intermediate portion 3065 of the liner hanger setting sleeve 650 preferably includes a plurality of axial slots 3070 equally positioned about the circumference of the intermediate portion 3065 in order to optimally permit wellbore fluids and other materials to be conveyed along the outside

20 surface of the apparatus 3000.

The apparatus 500 and 3000 are preferably used to fabricate and/or repair a wellbore casing, a pipeline, or a structural support. In several other alternative embodiments, the apparatus 500 and 3000 are used to fabricate a wellbore casing,

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pipeline, or structural support including a plurality of concentric tubular members coupled to a preexisting tubular member.

**TABLE FOR CONVERSION TO METRIC UNITS**

- 0 to 650 gallons/minute and 0 to 10,000 psi (0 to 2,460.51767 litres and 0 to 689.476 bar)
- 5    1000 to 10000 psi (68.95 to 689.5 bar)  
75,000 to 140,000 psi (5,171.06796 to 9,652.660192 bar)  
4 ½" (11.43 centimetres)  
0.005 to 0.010 inches (0.0127 to 0.0254 centimetres)  
500 to 2000 lbf/in (0.2394013 to 0.9576052 bar)
- 10    0.05 to 0.025 inches (0.127 to 0.0635 centimetres)  
0.06 inches (0.1524 centimetres)  
5 to 12 feet (1.524 metre to 3.6576 metre)  
40,000 to 125,000 psi (5,171.06796 to 8,618.4466 bar)  
0.12 to 2 inches (0.3048 to 5.08 centimetres)
- 15    8 to 20 inches (20.32 to 50.8 centimetres)  
0.25 to 2 inches (0.635 to 5.08 centimetres)  
0.10 to 2.00 inches (0.254 to 5.08 centimetres)  
0 to 10,000 psi and 0 to 650 gallons/minute (0 to 689.476 bar and 0 to 2,460.51767 litres)
- 20    0 to 10,000 psi and 0 to 200 gallons/minute (0 to 689.476 bar and 0 to 757.08236 litres)  
0 to 10,000 psi and 0 to 50 gallons/minute (0 to 689.476 bar and 0 to 189.27059 litres)  
0 to 10,000 psi (0 to 689.476 bar)  
1,000 to 3,000 psi (68.9475728 to 206.8427184 bar)  
1650 psi (113.7634951 bar)
- 25    500 to 3,000 psi (34.4737864 to 206.8427184 bar)  
3200 psi (220.632233 bar)

Claims

1. An apparatus, comprising:

a pre-existing structure; and

5 an expanded tubular member coupled to the pre-existing structure;  
wherein the expanded tubular member is coupled to the pre-existing structure by  
the process of:

positioning a support member, an expansion cone, and the tubular  
member within the pre-existing structure;

10 injecting a first quantity of a fluidic material into the pre-existing  
structure below the expansion cone; and

injecting a second quantity of a fluidic material into the pre-existing  
structure above the expansion cone and below the support  
structure.

15

2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein injecting the second quantity of the fluidic  
material comprises pressurizing a chamber above the expansion cone to a first pressure.

3. The apparatus of claim 1 or 2, wherein injecting the first quantity of the fluidic  
20 material comprises pressurizing a chamber below the expansion cone to a second  
pressure.

4. The apparatus of claim 3, wherein the first pressure is greater than the second  
pressure.

25

5. The apparatus of claim 4, further comprising displacing the expansion cone  
downwardly away from the support structure.

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6. The apparatus of claim 2 or 3, wherein the chamber above the expansion cone has a greater pressure than a chamber below the expansion cone.
7. The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the displacing the expansion cone comprises  
5 increasing a diameter of the tubular member.

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